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## The American Country Estate.

The handsomely printed volume of "Great American Estates," of which Mr. Barr Ferree is the author and compiler, is a welcome addition to the growing list of books on contemporary American domestic architecture; and it is welcome for several different reasons. The most important of these reasons is that the material is selected from one consistent and significant point of view. As its name implies, the book has been prepared particularly for the purpose of illustrating American country estates—that is, American country houses, which are surrounded by a large amount of land, and which have been designed somewhat with a view to this environment. Houses of this kind must always be the consummate type of domestic architecture. Just as they are on the one hand the expression of the finest and fullest sort of domestic life, so on the other they offer to the architect peculiarly satisfactory opportunities for complete and mature design. It was consequently an excellent idea to group together these different estates, with the result that a reader could obtain between the two covers of a book, some notion of what has been achieved in the way of associated landscape and residence design.

With a few exceptions these "great-American estates" are the creation of the past ten years. The majority of them are probably not more than five or six years old. Formerly the well-to-do American satisfied his craving for coun-

try residence with a villa at Newport or elsewhere. These villas sometimes assumed "palatial" dimensions, and were decorated on a scale of princely splendor; yet they remained none the less villas—country houses erected for habitation during a few months in the summer and generally surrounded by a comparatively small amount of land. But of late years Americans who could afford it, have been showing a disposition both to live in the country for more than the few summer months and to take more pleasure in the characteristic occupations of country life. The villa with its few acres of land no longer satisfied their needs. They wanted big country places, equipped with all the conveniences and properties belonging to the great English estates. Mr. Barr Ferree's book shows the manners in which they have satisfied this want. It does not, indeed, contain all the characteristic examples of this type of domestic architecture; and it comprises a number of houses, which, with their grounds, cannot by any stretch of the meaning be dignified by the word "estate." Still the book undoubtedly illustrates most of the examples of big American estates in the East, and it gives one the opportunity of making certain general comments on the tendencies exhibited by the design of these country places.

The most obvious comment is that these "great American estates" are estates more by way of assumption than by

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way of architectural achievement. They are, indeed, large enough and conspicuous enough to be called without exaggeration an estate of the country; but in certain other respects they have failed to qualify for the dignity, and have remained, from the point of view of architectural design, more in the lowly position of villas. When a villa is being built upon an acre or two of land, the house is, of course, the thing, and whatever treatment the grounds receive is wholly subordinate to the situation, the scale and the composition of the building. On the other hand when a residence is erected on an estate of five hundred acres, the house should become merely an incident in the lay-out of the whole estate. The land should be planned in reference to all of the requirements of the owner, and the location and the design of the house should be subordinate to the exigencies of such a plan. The lay-out would bring with it inevitably a certain treatment of the grounds in the immediate vicinity of the house, and of the flower-garden, into which the house, like any other architectural feature, would be settled. It is evident, however, in the case of these American "estates," no such course has been followed. They have been laid out much as the villa plots of two or three acres used to be laid out. No sufficient advantage has been taken of the fact that the owner of the estate controls probably all of the surrounding landscape, and is in a position to take the whole of the estate as his unit of treatment. The design of the house is not adjusted to the lay-out of the land. On the contrary, the lay-out of the land is adapted to the location and the design of the house—both of which are selected or prepared without much reference to the plan of the estate considered as a whole. It is the house which the American considers first, last and always—no matter whether the house be a villa or a palace in a park.

The overwhelming majority of American house-owners would undoubtedly fail to appreciate the force of any criticism of American methods of design,

which was based upon the foregoing limitation. They would take it as a matter of course that the house was the thing, and that any landscape treatment should be subordinated to the design of the house; and the attitude which they have instinctively taken in this matter is the natural result of their whole point of view towards country life. The owners of the big English estates live in the country, and sojourn for some months of each year in the town. The owners of the large American estates are still essentially town-folk, who are only sojourning for a few months of each year in the country. The period of this sojourn is longer than it used to be; their houses are kept open all winter, and are occupied frequently for week-end parties. Still their relation to the country remains essentially casual and artificial. They raise a few vegetables for their own table, a little corn for their stock, as many cows and horses as they need for their own use, and flowers enough to decorate their houses. These things are merely the conveniences and properties of country life, the care of which is turned over to hired employees. The point of view is as different as possible from that of an English country proprietor, who generally derives an income from his estate, and is attached to it by all sorts of family and personal ties, and whose house has settled down into an architectural efflorescence of a neatly parted and combed landscape.

To the well-to-do American, on the other hand, his estate is only one of the spoils of his financial conquests. He may take a genuine interest in certain country sports; but beyond that in "returning to the country" he is merely adapting himself to a tradition, which his common sense tells him is a good thing for himself and his children. The country means to him a country house within an hour or two of New York; and the architect whom he employs, inevitably adapts himself to his client's point of view. The estate generally contains a hill overlooking the surrounding country, which is the inevitable site of the dwelling, because our

American barons, like the feudal nobility of old, prefer to perch their castles high, and have their domains at their feet. They wish to see, and to be seen. The house becomes the most conspicuous object in the landscape, and the pervading purposes of the landscape design will be to give access to the house, and when there to command, the view. Indeed as a rule nothing more than this is possible. The crest of the hills rarely contains enough space for any very elaborate and well-organized landscape treatment. The garden is merely an incident to the view, and its minor beauties cannot compete with the great effects of distance, of sunshine and shadow, of cloud and foliage, of varied colors and solid form, which a fine big view offers. Of course there are many estates, the residence whereof is situated on comparatively level ground, and in which a better opportunity is provided to design a house and garden, the aesthetic purpose of which is less spectacular and more domestic and substantial; but these opportunities betray just as plainly the pre-occupation of the owner and the architect. The grounds are generally slurred. The garden and the other landscape accessories are inadequate to the scale of the house. The buildings and the architectural "features" and furniture are too conspicuous in the total effect. The planting is for the most part ill-managed and insufficient. One rarely gets any sense from these estates, as one does from the Italian villas and their gardens or from the English country mansions, that the architecture belongs to the landscape. In the case of the Italian villas, their propriety as country houses is fundamentally a matter of intelligent design. In the case of the English mansions, it is fundamentally a matter of persistent and wholesomely country life on the part of their proprietors. But whatever the cause, the result is a harmony between the house and its environment, which results neither from a mutilation of nature on the one hand, nor from any architectural irregularities on the other.

The comparative ill-success of Ameri-

can landscape design is partly due to an artificial point of view toward country life, which gives it the appearance of a from-Saturday-till-Monday variety-show; and it is partly due to the inexperience of American architects in this branch of design. They fully intend to tie their houses well into the landscape, and give the immediate natural surroundings of the house a pleasurable and habitable form; but they have to contend with many difficulties. The American landscape, even in the older parts of the country, is generally unkempt, and does not lend itself as readily to formal treatment as does the typical English or continental landscape. The owners of the big estates rarely appreciate the scale, on which the landscape architecture should be laid out, and the patience which is necessary to obtain a complete and consummate effect. They want ready-made estates. Finally, the leading American house architects have, with a few exceptions, a good deal to learn about the technique of landscape design. So far as the large house itself is concerned, a convention has been established which is in the main a good convention, but the designing of gardens is still in an early experimental stage. The stage properties are collected in abundance. There is no lack of pergolas, fountains, well-heads, gazebos, statuary, and pottery; but as like as not they are indiscriminately placed. The architectural features are, however, generally somewhat better managed than the planting, which frequently looks as if an Irish gardener had been given some vague general directions, or as if the lady of the house had considered that it was a woman's business to make the garden green. As a matter of fact, however, the lady of the house, in case she has her own way, generally paints the garden yellow and red rather than green. Her idea usually is merely to get as much bloom as possible; and this she does at a sacrifice of those masses of foliage, which are absolutely necessary to give mass, body and depth to a large garden.

We Americans are too apt to be-

lieve that we can achieve a complicated and admirable result merely by virtue of good intentions. We assume that because the owners and the architects of these large estates have sought in good faith to rival the classic examples of landscape architecture, and because in so doing they have created houses, gardens, and estates, according to some sort of a general plan—we assume that because they have tried to do these things that therefore they have already succeeded. But these first attempts should be regarded not as successful achievements, but as well-intended experiments. Before the experiment can reach the stage of mature and finished accomplishment, the owners of these estates must have learned to live in the country, and have come to regard their estates as something more than the spoils of their triumph and as the scenery of their social exploits; they must have learned literally and metaphorically to cultivate their gardens. Country life, if it means anything except a vacation or a shifting of the scene for a round of city sports, should mean a patient, leisurely, submissive, and even a contemplative habit of mind. Nature cannot be hurried or bullied or bought into yielding her fruits, intellectual or material; and the owners of these country estates have hitherto been as a rule trying to buy their way into her treasure-house. With the help of their architects they have made a fine show of succeeding; but no matter how much the owners of these houses mistake the appearance of success for its reality, it is very important for American architecture, that disinterested observers should not make the same mistake.

It would be equally a mistake to believe that the design of American country estates has made an entirely false start. Undoubtedly the chief concern of their designers, both as regards the interior and the exterior of the houses, is to make a fine big show—and once this show has been obtained they do not stop to consider how far this splendor of appearance is likely to prove

permanently satisfactory. As a matter of fact it is sure to be as little satisfactory in the long run as any other stage-setting. Life in a millionaire's "colony" at Newport may be turned into a spectacle, but genuine country life must become something else. None the less it has for the present a certain kind of suitability. It pleases the tastes and meets the needs of the people who own these estates; and it performs these services in a way which is on the whole aesthetically meritorious. The American business man wants the strong sensation of magnificent domestic surroundings; and he believes that he can make this magnificent authentic by deriving it from the forms and relics of European palaces. Neither are the fruits of this conviction so inappropriate as they seem. The American millionaire sometimes controls resources, as large as the personal revenues of a European prince; and he possesses by right an analogous, if not a similar, social outlook. If he has no social inferiors, he also has no social superiors. He is free to express his tastes without the fear, which a European "bourgeois" must always feel, of being presumptuous and ridiculous. When such a man finds himself in the possession of more money than he can spend, it is no wonder that he adapts his habitation to his income rather than to his occupations and customs. He is full of the pride of life and the self-confidence of success, and has no one to consult but his wife.

Of course he may have to consult his architect also; but the architect has no call to emasculate the aesthetic ambition of his client. He can only accept a condition of this kind and make the best of it. His first duty is to design and decorate a house, which will please and interest its owner, not only because he has no chance of personal success on any other footing, but because it is right and appropriate that a man's house should be the sort of thing a man likes. If the sort of things a man likes is hopelessly meretricious, an architect can decline to fill the bill, but if he agrees to fill the bill, he is also obliged to cut the



clothes to fit the man. Then the architect himself is not prone to be a person of ascetic tastes. As like as not his preferences will run in the direction of the "stunning" thing; and if his client wants a howling palace, why should he deny the demand? As a matter of fact, of course, he does not deny the demand; he merely fills it to the best of his ability; and his ability is frequently very considerable—particularly so far as the design of the house alone is concerned.

The demand of the rich American that his house and its surroundings be made interesting to him is a perfectly legitimate demand; and in the long run it will be a good thing for American domestic architecture that a positive and lively standard of aesthetic effect has been thereby popularized and established. No matter what the penalty, we do not want in this country a prevailing convention of house embellishment, whose greatest merit consists in a sort of unobtrusive refinement. Since we are young, it is better to be a little barbarous than to be prematurely discreet—particularly when it is remembered that under such circumstances our discretion would be forced and self-conscious. Assuming that the better Americans will be capable of assimilating a sound sense of the aesthetic proprieties, the barbarism may become informed without any loss of vitality. Indeed the "palatial" period of American domestic architecture is already on the wane. The newer houses, while they still proclaim loudly their owner's opulence, indicate the influence of better ideas of propriety, architectural and social; and it may be confidently expected that the future movement will run in the same direction.

While, however, the "palatial" house is losing some of its noisier improprieties, it is not the houses of the very rich, which constitute the best contemporary achievement of American domestic architecture or its best hope for the future. These houses receive most attention, because they are most spectacular, and because their proprietors are frequently the popular American heroes

of the day; but they are not intrinsically the most interesting. Their owners frequently want a good thing, and their architects are skilful; but both good intentions and skill tend to be vitiated by the fact, that whatever else the houses express, they must inevitably express superabundant wealth. Americans do everything with their wealth except to "forget it." The result is that there is too much of everything—too much gilt, too much furniture, too much upholstery, too much space, too many styles, and most of all, perhaps, too much ceiling. What these houses and grounds require is not a negative refinement, but a thoroughgoing simplification. In many cases comparative simple architectural schemes have been smothered by a multitude of irrelevant and unnecessary trappings; in other cases it is the design itself which needs simplifying. But wherever the over-richness and elaboration comes in, the great necessity with which every collection of these houses impresses the observer, is this necessity for more simplicity; and in houses built by the better American architects for well-to-do people, who are not inebriated by their opulence, one is much more apt to find designs which are simple without being attenuated.

The most interesting contemporary American country houses are apt to be the houses which cost between \$20,000 and \$150,000. When their owners spend less than \$20,000, it is rare that an architect in good standing is employed, because the fees of such an architect are proportionately larger for an inexpensive than for an expensive job. Moreover the small house-builder has an impression, which is not altogether erroneous, that the modest house does not get its fair share of attention in the big office; and even in those offices which do give their best services to the small client, it is unusual that a really complete house and garden design can be realized for \$20,000. On the other hand, as already pointed out, the owner of a country place that costs several hundred thousand dollars or more, general-

ly wants his money to make a big show with a result, which, however admirable and interesting in certain respects, betrays its hybrid origin in its flamboyant appearance. The formula for this result is a million dollars of building enriched with historical relics and tempered by architectural academies. but the house which costs between \$25,000 and \$150,000 has a fairer chance. When it is given to a good architect, which unfortunately is not often the case, it at once provides a decent opportunity without dispensing with the salutary necessity of economy. Such a house is more likely to be thoroughly designed than is the bigger or the smaller house—designed, that is, without reference either to irrelevant and oppressive superfluities on the one hand or mutilating omissions on the other. The economic scale of a house of this class harmonizes with the normal life of a well-to-do American family; and it has the chance at least of reaching the final grace and propriety of the domestic building—a propriety which is constituted as much by integrity of the owner's tastes and manners as it is by the strictly architectural skill of its designer.

It should never be forgotten that the making of the consummate residence depends as much upon the prevalence of right ideas and good taste among house-owners as it does upon the ability of the architect to design a good-looking and appropriate house and grounds. The future of American public and commercial architecture rests chiefly with the architects. Limited as they are in many directions by the ignorance of politicians, and the indifferent or meretricious taste of business men, they are gaining the authority, which will enable them to make American public and industrial buildings edifying and beautiful or the reverse. But in the case of residences, all that the architect can do is to supply a well-formed and fitting frame and scheme to a picture which must be finished by the people who live in the house. No matter how intelligently the designer may adapt a dwelling to the manner of living of its inhabi-

tants, it will not aesthetically belong to them, until they have added to its effect the imprint of the kind of life they lead and the sort of domestic appurtenances they prefer. This is not so much the case in a country, the finest dwellings of which belong to an aristocratic class with certain common traditions as to the manner and symbols of their domestic life. In such cases the house will require only an impressive impersonality of effect, which is attainable by an architect. But Americans are individuals before they are members of any class or social group, and the individual note is necessary to any American dwelling, which is all that an American dwelling should be.

The difficulty with many interesting residences is that a good architect has either had too much or too little to do with them. In the former case the effect, however beautiful, is necessarily impersonal and perhaps a little frigid,—as if the fire had gone out in the aesthetic hearth, or the family were afraid to warm their hands at the blaze. A man should not be afraid of his own dwelling any more than he should be afraid of his butler, and a house with which its owner does not dare to be familiar may be good-looking, but it can hardly be gracious and charming. On the other hand there are many houses, the owners of which have insisted upon planning and decorating the interior and laying out the grounds with only clerical assistance from an architect; and it cannot be too emphatically asserted that this is not the proper way to secure an excellent, much less a consummate result. Remember that I am confining this part of the discourse to "interesting residences." Houses which express merely vulgar or commonplace proprietors are excluded. The point is that even people of good taste and genuine likes and dislikes about the appearance of their homes probably make a mistake in dispensing with the services of a good architect. It is possible, of course, that an amateur may have a natural instinct for design, which will enable him to do better for himself than

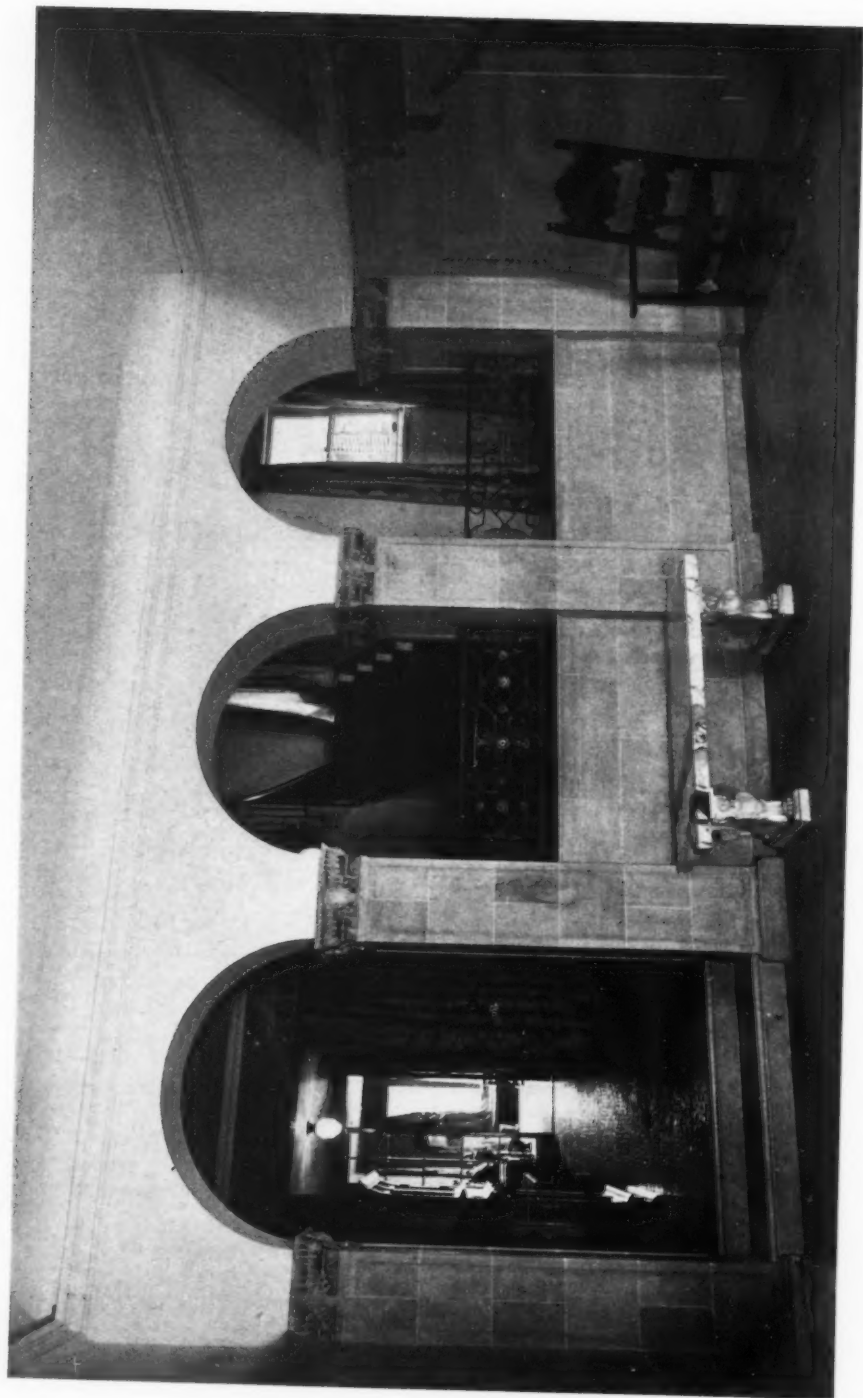
anybody else, however skillful, can do for him; but ninety-nine times out of one hundred the training, the experience and the gift of the professional man is necessary to give any complete form to the result. Without the architect the result may be individual and charming; but it can rarely possess the highest quality which a house can possess—the quality of style.

The quality of style is of all aesthetic qualities the most difficult to describe. It is so simple and unmistakable in its effect, yet so complicated and evasive in its origin. I cannot attempt to define it, but perhaps some idea of its meaning can be inferred from the enumeration of several important elements of effect, the omission of any one of which would rob the dwelling of genuine style. It implies for one thing a certain integrity in the formal design of a building—the working out of an appropriate architectural idea in a manner which is both consistent and interesting. It implies in addition to this fundamental correctness of design, the power to awaken relevant and suggestive memories. A "stylish" house must express the derivation of our own good domestic manners from certain former distinguished ways of living by recalling without necessarily copying the architectural forms and materials associated with these desirable manners. All this can be contributed by an architect; but he cannot contribute the final touch of propriety—the sense that the house is a house in which an individual with some integrity of life and taste has dwelt. The inhabitants of the house must complete the picture, which has been planned, framed and sketched in by the designer; and the fact that the designer has contributed so much need not diminish in any way the ultimate individuality and charm of the result. It merely gives to the total effect style as well as expressiveness.

A house and garden can hardly be permanently satisfactory without some such quality. Americans build, it is true, for only one generation; and the

children destroy or neglect the structures which their fathers have reared—perhaps with labor and love. But it may be hoped that the better country residence of to-day will commend itself to the next generation by its power of satisfying certain permanent domestic and aesthetic demands. This power cannot be granted to houses and gardens which are intensely and exclusively individual. Such a house dies with the man or woman that makes it. Indeed, frequently its propriety, the mood which it embodies no longer pleases even its owner and consequently instead of being mellowed and confirmed by the dignity of years, it is totally transformed. But a house which possesses style, which answers permanent aesthetic needs by the use of appropriate and pleasurable forms—such a house may be perpetuated by its own perennial value, and by its own flexible charm. The so-called "Colonial" house has been the only type of American residence, which has possessed anything of this quality; and "Colonial" houses are preserved for this reason. On the other hand the neo-classic temples and the Gothic villas, which succeeded the "Colonial" house, appealed only to an arbitrary and evanescent architectural whim, and consequently survive only because of possible economic value. In regard to the houses of the present day, it looks as if many of the most expensive "palaces" will fail to be interesting at the end of thirty or forty years. I certainly hope that such will be the case, because these houses, whatever their architectural merits and temporary propriety, are places in which a man, who is not stupified by his own opulence, could not possibly live. Nevertheless there are some dwellings planned upon a smaller scale, which may prove to be permanently satisfactory; and if the good American architect, in building such dwellings, will only keep in mind the fundamental necessity of simplifying both the design and the ornament, the proportion of the permanently satisfactory houses will increase.

*Herbert Croly.*



ENTRANCE HALLWAY IN THE HOUSE OF MR. NORMAN HAPGOOD.

Photo by A. Patzig.

East 73d Street, New York City.

Chas. A. Platt, Architect.



## House of Mr. Norman Hapgood.

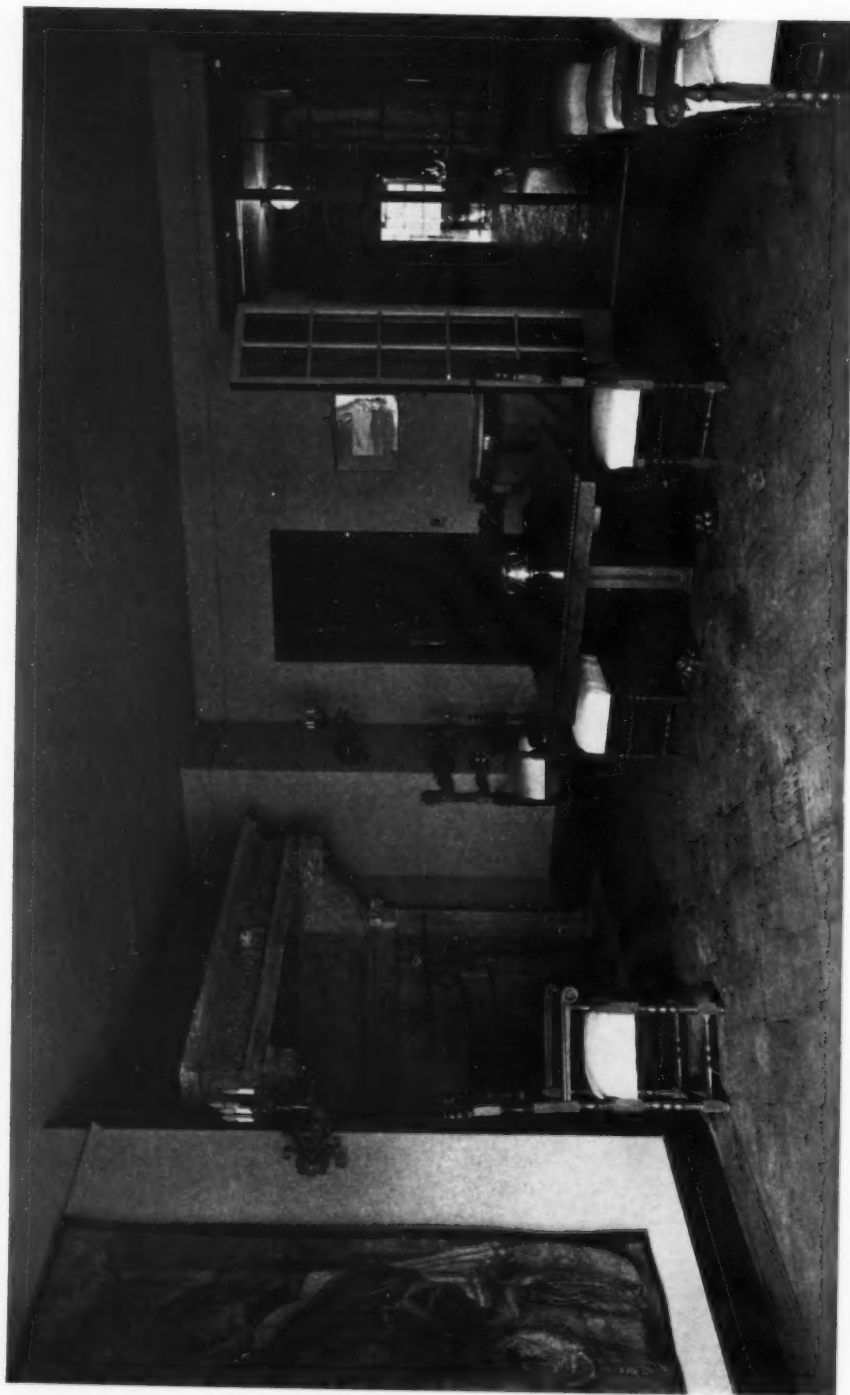
The house of Mr. Norman Hapgood, illustrated herewith, is in size and plan typical of the contemporary medium-priced New York house. It is arranged, as usual, with the entrance on the ground floor, with the dining-room in the rear of the ground floor, and with the front and back rooms of the second floor occupied respectively by the living and drawing-rooms. The house is only a little over twenty feet wide; but, owing to the economical distribution of the space, the important rooms are all large and well-proportioned apartments. It is a remodeled building, which, after its purchase by Mr. Hapgood, was decorated over again under the supervision of Mr. Charles A. Platt, and the design of a number of the rooms exhibits that combination of simplicity of form with vivacity of effect which characterizes Mr. Platt's work.

The house is entered on the street level through a hall, which is particularly worth attention, because it deserves to be taken as a model treatment of an entrance hallway to a house of this size and plan. An entrance hall is, of course, fundamentally a passageway between the street and the living rooms of a house; but in many New York dwellings it serves the additional purpose of providing a place, in which guests remove their coats and wraps. In the case of Mr. Hapgood's house, an alcove, occupying the space not required by the outer vestibule, offers a sheltered corner in which women can disrobe; and thus it serves excellently its secondary purpose. But it serves its primary purpose still better. A successful room is at bottom an embodiment of good manners; and this hallway introduces a visitor to the house in a manner that is at once discreet, sincere and cordial. The room is treated with the utmost sobriety and with a complete lack of decorative superfluities and affectations; but it is

as far as possible from being chilly and dull. In spite of its marble floor and stone walls, it is a gracious, almost a habitable room, in which one likes to linger; and this pleasant propriety of aspect may be traced as much to the poise, with which the room carries itself, as to the agreeable anticipations it affords that a further acquaintance with the house will be equally pleasant.

We have said that the hall has a manner of being discreet, sincere and cordial; and it may be as well to translate the figure into the corresponding architectural terms. If the room has the air of receiving its visitors graciously, it is, perhaps, chiefly because its color tone is warm and positive. The artificial Caen stone, with which the walls are finished, has been subdued to a slightly deeper yellow than is usually the case, and its tint harmonizes admirably with the warm grey of the Italian mantelpiece. The plaster above the stone shows somewhat too white; but this is a blemish which the New York atmosphere will quickly cure. On the other hand, the reserve which is mixed with this graciousness of demeanor, comes chiefly from the avoidance of ornamental irrelevances. There is, indeed, very little detail of any kind. The east and west walls are relieved by two large flat panels. The Caen stone is appropriately capped by a moulding, which on the piers becomes capitalized, and a simple plaster moulding marks the curve of the wall into the ceiling. The room can stand this absence of ornament, because it depends for effect upon the primary sources thereof—upon its interesting plan, its correct proportions, and its fitness to its purpose. What we have called the sincerity of its demeanor is the outcome of this æsthetic integrity.

If the reader would like to appreciate how much of an achievement this is, let him compare the photographs of this hall with those of similar rooms



DINING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. NORMAN HAPGOOD.

Photo by A. Patzig.

East 73d Street, New York City.

Chas. A. Platt, Architect.

in houses of similar size and plan. The writer has made such a comparison with some care, and while the other rooms all have their points of interest and excellence, their deportment is in each case injured by some intentional or unintentional impropriety. It would be invidious to name the owners of these other rooms; but it can do no harm to catalogue a few of the ways in which the designers of entrance hallways impair the æsthetic integrity of such apartments. In one case the hall of a house rather smaller in size has been made charming with a number of amusing decorative episodes; but these incidents are so prominent that the total impression is that of a room which is rather affectedly pretty. In another the scale of the hall was such as to constitute an introduction to a large and "palatial" house rather than one erected on a twenty foot lot. In another instance the walls of a very carefully designed hall were disfigured with an eruption of bloated ornament, which would be positively distressing to anybody whose eye had not been perverted by false training. In a fourth instance, a very reserved and gentlemanly room, finished in the same greyish tone as that of Mr. Hapgood's, was marred by the red brick with which the chimney was lined. In still another the integrity of the effect was injured because the entrance hall was separated from the stairway landing by a wooden railing of colonial design, which was totally out of keeping with the stone paneling of the hall and its marble floors. The catalogue might be continued; but the foregoing will give the reader some idea of mistakes which have been actually made in the halls of houses, all of them about twenty feet wide and all of them designed as a transitional apartment between the street and the living-rooms.

One of the happiest features of the hall in Mr. Hapgood's house is its method of communication with the stair-landing and with the passage-way to the dining-room. On that side of the room the wall is broken into three arches, through one of which passage is

obtained, while the other two are enclosed up to a height of about three feet by a continuation of the wall. Thus the identity of the hall is preserved, while at the same time one's eye is tempted to look into the rest of the house. The passage-way to the dining-room, which is reached by walking up the two steps and through the arch, is paved with Moravian tiles, and the railing of the stairway is an excellent example of modern wrought-iron design. The stairway itself is of wood. Stone would have been more in keeping; but there are obvious reasons why an architect cannot use as much stone as he would like. The iron railing does not rest upon the wooden stairs, as a wooden railing might, but it maintains its character by being fastened into the sides of the stair treads.

The space at our disposal has been occupied chiefly by an attempt to characterize the entrance hallway, because the illustrations of this room show the reader really what it is, and he can check our observations with his own. In the other rooms there is very little design which does not depend chiefly on the use of colors; and illustrations in black and white cannot help the reader to appreciate a scheme of decoration which depends so largely upon what the reproduction fails to show. In the case of one room, we have, however, attempted to give some idea of the color scheme—viz., the living-room on the second floor. The frontispiece of this issue of the *Architectural Record* is a reproduction of this room in colors, and while much is lost in this reproduction it supplies a fair notion, not of the quality of the different tones in which the room is finished, but of their relative value. The effect of this very beautiful room is derived from the rich red patterned fabric on the wall, the grey of the mantel piece, and the dull blue with which the spaces between shallow beams of the ceiling have been filled. In the reproduction the red is not as deep as it should be, the grey of the mantel piece is hard, and there is too much yellow in the suffused light. These limitations



MANTELPIECE IN THE DRAWING-ROOM OF MR. NORMAN HAPGOOD'S HOUSE.

Photo by A. Patzig.

East 73d Street, New York City.

Chas. A. Platt, Architect.



can, however, hardly be avoided in color printing; and the reproduction conveys a fair, if not an accurate impression of the room. The illustrations of the other apartments in black and white show some furniture and mantel pieces, which are worth careful examination. The mantel in the dining-room looks, it may be remarked, rather big in scale for the room; but the Adams mantel in the

drawing-room is a rare and lovely thing. It should be remarked, also, that in this house the error of overcrowding the rooms with furniture and ornaments—the besetting defect of the great majority of contemporary houses—has not been committed. The sense of space and the proper relative importance of the architecture of the room are always preserved.



ENTRANCE HALLWAY IN THE HOUSE OF MR. NORMAN HAPGOOD.

Photo by A. Patzig.

East 73d Street, New York City.

Chas. A. Platt, Architect.



THE HOUSE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Architects. { L. Henry Morgan,  
John G. Howard,  
D. Everett Wald.



SQUASH-COURT ON THE PLACE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Architects. (L. Henry Morgan,  
John G. Howard,  
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## House of Mr. J. B. Harriman.

Mount Kisco, N. Y.

The writer of an article on "Great American Estates" in this number of the Architectural Record is responsible for the assertion that the better American work in domestic design is being achieved in houses which cost somewhere between \$25,000 and \$150,000. An illustration, if not a proof, of this statement may be found in the pictures of the house of Mr. J. B. Harriman at Mount Kisco, New York, which are given herewith. Mr. Harriman's dwelling is distinctly a medium-priced building, although it tends towards the upper rather than the lower end of the limit. The scale of the place is precisely that which should commend itself to a well-to-do gentleman in search of a country residence. It is not so large that its inhabitants would become insignificant compared to their appurtenances; yet it is large and handsome enough to give an effect of ease, good taste, of hospitality, and of a well-favored abundance.

The people who occupied would at least have a chance of living a country life for its own sake; and if in the present instance the surroundings suggest an interest in sport rather than an interest in the more fundamental rural amusements, that is merely a matter of individual preference. The fact remains that the house starts on its worldly career in a right-minded condition, and does not betray either an incongruous pretension or a self-conscious humility and reticence. It is what it pretends to be, and it pretends to be something good and appropriate.

The exterior is in no particular style, yet it immediately arouses associations with a sound and attractive style of domestic architecture. It is a balanced composition, well scaled in its subordinate members, frank and simple in its detail, and both picturesque and vigorous in its total effect. The design of the interiors possesses similar characteristics.

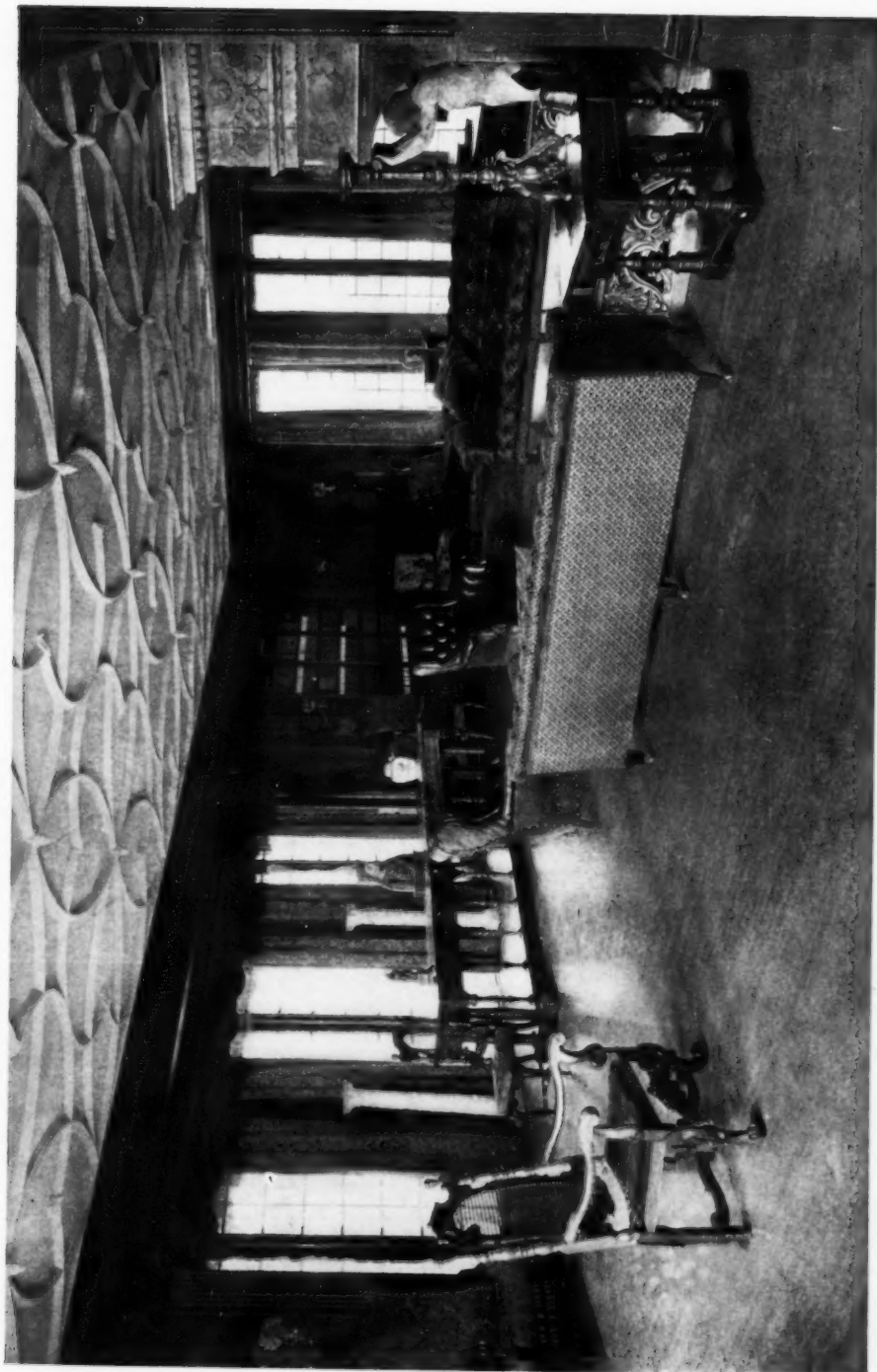


LIVING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

(L. Henry Morgan,  
John G. Howard,  
Architects.  
(D. Everett Wald.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

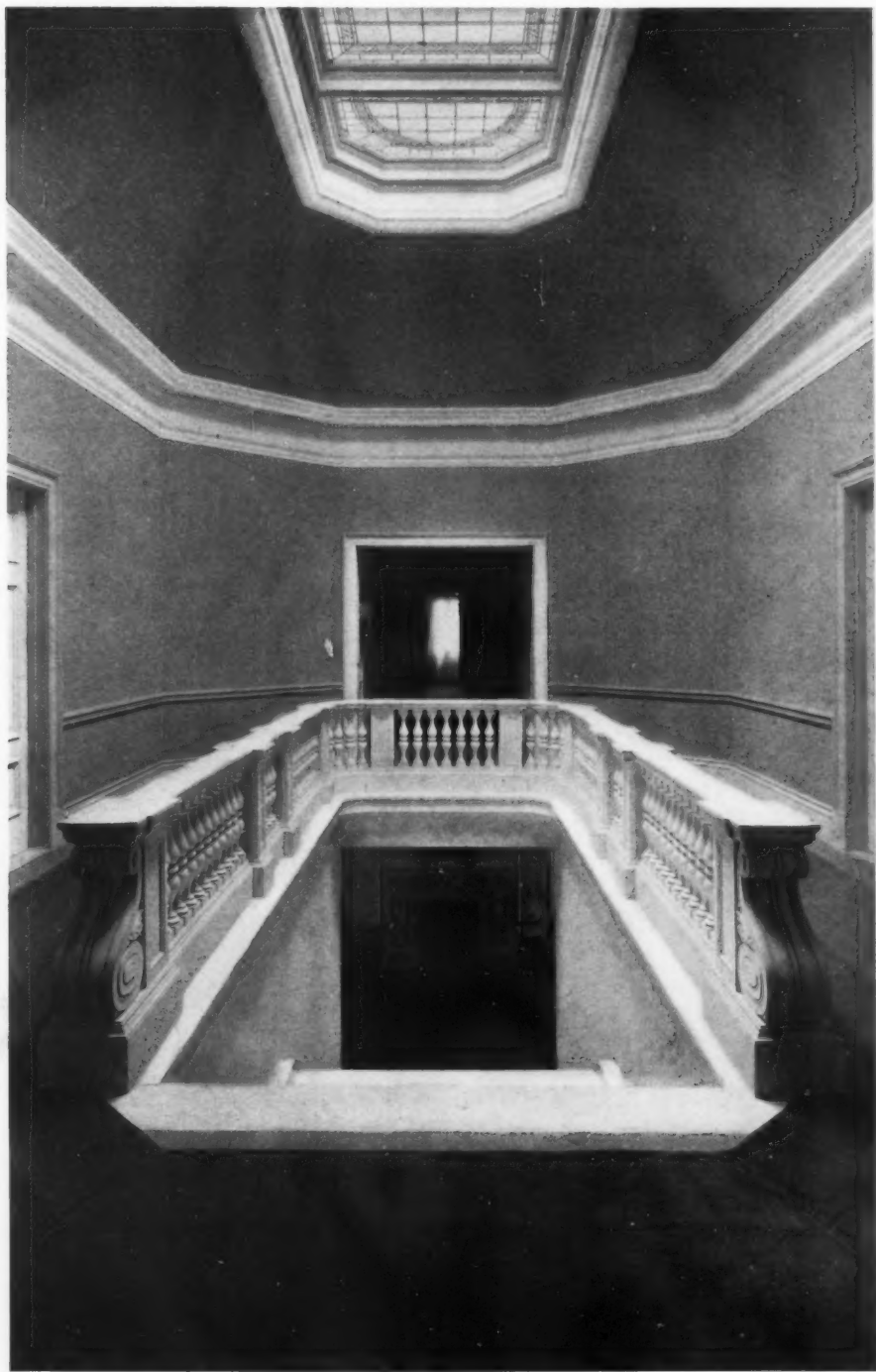




LIVING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Architects: { L. Henry Morgan,  
John G. Howard,  
D. Everett Wald.



STAIR-HALL IN THE HOUSE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

Architects: ( L. Henry Morgan,  
John G. Howard,  
D. Everett Wald,

The living-room is not only spacious and comfortable, but what is a very different thing, it gives the sense of being spacious and comfortable. It is not filled with irrelevant and futile properties and adornments. It is simply a fine large room, paneled to the ceiling, in dark wood, and furnished in any style you please. It is large enough to hold the two Davenport lounges—an article of furniture which is as modern as it is excellent in the right place—and some good solid, comfortable chairs. For the rest its very bareness is attractive. There are not many things, but whatever is, is right—among which may be mentioned the snug way in which the book-shelves are fitted into the walls. Some objections may be taken to the scale of the very beautiful mantelpiece, to its relation with the paneling behind, and to the brick lining of the chimney, which would have looked better in a greyish tone; but these are minor blemishes. They diminish by very little the

substantial value of this unusual example of a living-room, in which one might like to live. Neither is this favorable impression disturbed by the glimpses which we obtain of the other apartments. The stair hall is as plain and business-like as a stair-hall ought to be; while the boudoir is charming in spite, or rather because, of its refreshing simplicity and its perfect fitness. The little dark cabinet and desk are not in keeping; but even they do not detract very much from the integrity of this pleasant little room. Inasmuch as this house is only recently finished, it still requires the confirmation which comes from several years of use. The grounds have not received the attention they will eventually get, and the rooms are still of course aggressively new; but the occupants of the house are to be congratulated upon the start towards a most satisfactory result, which has been made with the assistance of their architects, Messrs. Howard, Morgan and Waid.



BOUDOIR IN THE HOUSE OF MR. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN.

Mt. Kisco, N. Y.

( L. Henry Morgan,  
Architects: - John G. Howard,  
( D. Everett Waid.



LOUNGING-ROOM IN THE COURT BUILDING AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

Photo by A. Patzig.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.





THE COURT AND POOL BUILDING AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

Photo by A. Patzig.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

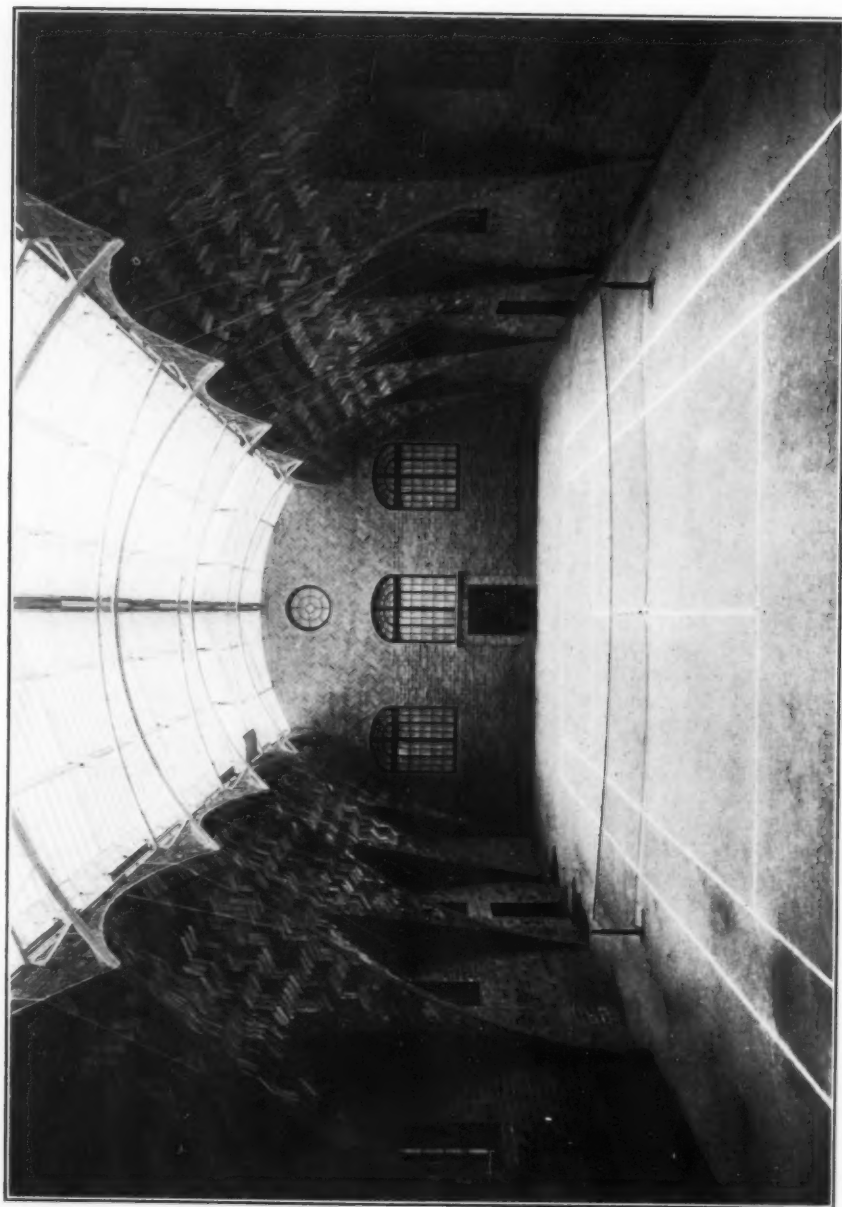
## ↓ Court and Pool at "Ferncliff."

The Country Residence of Col. John Jacob Astor.

There can be no doubt that the majority of well-to-do Americans are more genuinely interested in country sports than in any of the other characteristic occupations of country life. They are proud of their gardens; but they participate in rural sports and really enjoy them; and since, other things being equal, the most significant architecture of a people is likely to attach itself to their most genuine pleasures, the attempt to design architectural forms suitable to country sports has a peculiar interest. It is an interest of this kind, which is aroused by the tennis court and pool recently completed for "Ferncliff," Col. John Jacob Astor's place at Rhinebeck, New York. In this case the building has been planned on a large and elaborate scale. There is a huge enclosed court for lawn tennis, with brick walls, partly domed and carried by a steel frame structure. The floor is cemented, and the court is lighted by a skylight running the whole length of the building. In addition to the court, there is a very beautiful marble pool, a large lounging room, and a number of dressing and bed-rooms. It is becoming more and more the custom to lodge

bachelor guests in an out-building of this description, so that its purpose is not confined merely to in-door tennis and bathing.

The architects of the building were Messrs. McKim, Mead & White; and following their usual practice they have adapted a particular historical model to the purpose of the modern building. The model selected in this case was the Petit Trianon, Marie Antoinette's pretty retreat at Versailles; and it was not, perhaps, as happy a selection as has been made in certain other cases. The architectural scale, that is, of a huge arched tennis court is very different from that of a piece of "bijoux" architecture such as the Petit Trianon. It is true that greater bulk and scale of the court does not show from the front, because it is situated in the rear and the land falls away in that direction. This fact has given the architect an opportunity to place the floor of the court on a considerably lower level than that of the rest of the building with the result that only a little of the roof of the court can be seen from the front. But the disproportion in scale is fully exposed by the picture of the rear of the building,

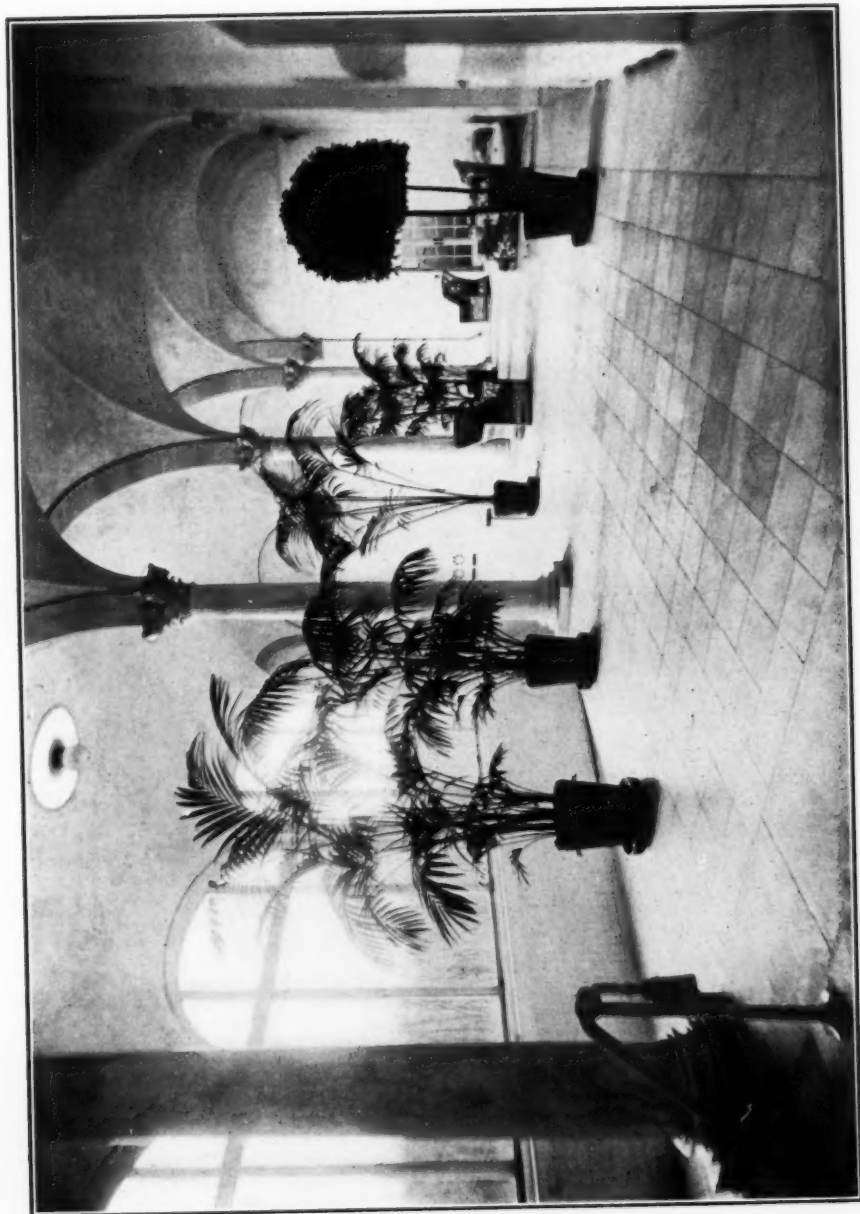


THE TENNIS COURT AT "FERNSCLIFF,"

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

Photo by A. Patzig.



THE POOL AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

Photo by A. Patzig.



DETAIL IN THE LOUNGING-ROOM AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

Photo by A. Patzig.

McKim, Mead &amp; White, Architects.

in which the large plain surfaces of the court, its considerable bulk, and its three stories high, constitute rather a violent contrast to the low dainty little porch with its columns.

The long low well-proportioned facade of the building, with its arched windows and pilaster strips is, however,

complete, until it has received a carefully finished landscape treatment. The Petit Trianon was essentially a house in a park, or rather in a big garden and any building of that kind requires elaborately formal gardening in its immediate vicinity. Neither will it be easy to lay out any formal scheme of archi-



DRESSING-ROOM IN THE COURT BUILDING AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

Photo by A. Patzig.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

very charming. People using it drive into an enclosed and roofed court, giving upon a hall which connects with the tennis court and with both wings of the house. It is a convenient arrangement, which keeps all the important rooms on one floor, and which is particularly appropriate for a structure, used more as a play-house than as a living-house. It will not, of course, be architecturally

tectural lines, levels and planting which would fit a building of these dimensions to a bare site on the top of rising ground; but its appearance will certainly be very much improved by a proper terracing and planting of the site and, perhaps, by a different line of approach. Anybody with a little imagination can furnish to his own satisfaction a possible scheme of landscape



treatment; and with this picture in his mind's eye, a sensitive person must feel again the charm of such a house in such surroundings. These attempts to reconstruct bits of European architectural scenery must fascinate Americans as long as their own history and life remains without its appropriate and time-honored symbols.

The interior inevitably preserves the same general character as the exterior; and it is an excellent example of the skill with which Messrs. McKim, Mead & White use classic and Renaissance detail as the basis for interior design. The successful application of such established forms to a series of rooms depends, of course, chiefly upon the scale of the detail; and in a matter of scale the architects of this building are rarely at fault. One has only to compare the handling of these forms in the lounging room with that exhibited in certain rooms of the Morse House, illustrated elsewhere in this number, in order to appreciate the difference between a firm and positive rendering of classic detail

and one that is thin and over-refined. The lounging room is assuredly a very good-looking as well as a very comfortable apartment. Its particular character is derived chiefly from its sky-light. The radiance of the light so obtained, together with the French windows and the palms, co-operate with its size to make it something of an out-of-doors room—a room that is, in which one feels as little as possible the transition between the open air of the country, and the confinement even of a country house. At the same time its big chairs and sofas make it eminently a room in which a man may take his ease after tennis and a swim. Altogether these interiors produce the pleasantest kind of an impression; and if Marie Antoinette found the Petit Trianon an appropriate retreat when she wished to play at being a shepherdess, the inhabitants of "Ferncliff" should certainly find their new building an equally appropriate setting for their own less sentimental and more wholesome games and sports.



REAR OF THE COURT AND POOL BUILDING AT "FERNCLIFF."

The Estate of Col. John Jacob Astor, at Rhinebeck, N. Y.

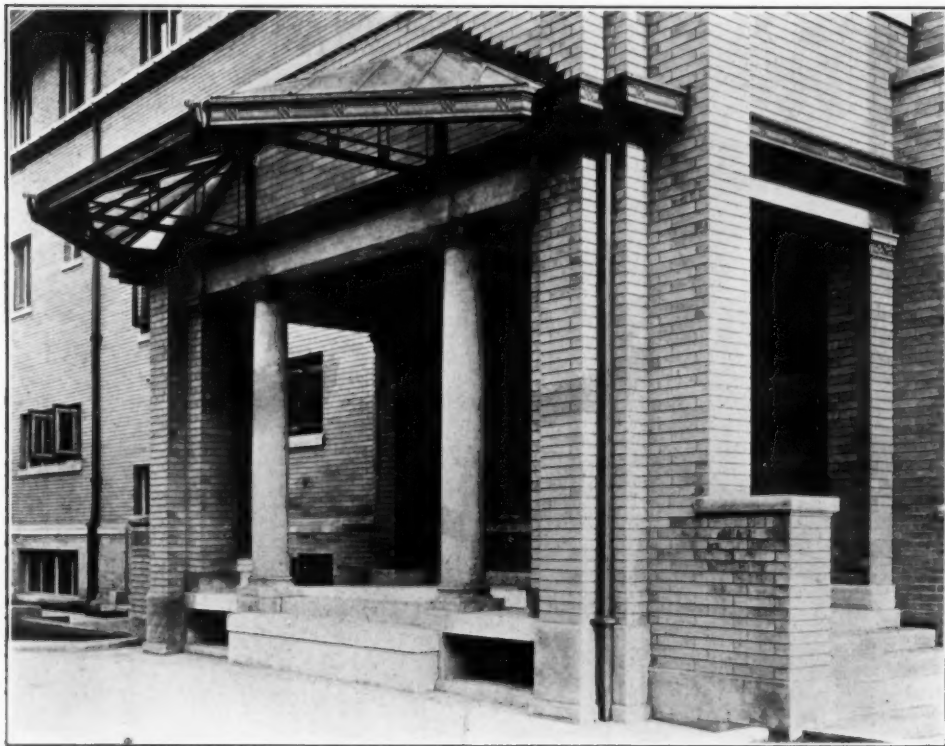
Photo by A. Patzig.

McKim, Mead & White, Architects.

## The Rosenwald House.

In the East well-to-do families generally have both a city house and a country place, which architecturally are sharply distinguished from each other; but in the West such is much less frequently the case. There are, of course, many fine country houses in the West,

man, in building a new residence, will probably choose a suburban site—a site that is containing two or three acres abutting on a street and surrounded by the grounds of similar dwellings. This house is planned as a permanent residence. It is situated in a neighborhood



THE ENTRANCE PORCH.

The House of Mr. J. Rosenwald.

No. 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago.

Nimmons & Fellows, Architects.

such as those grouped around the shores of Lake Geneva, in Wisconsin; and particularly in Chicago many of the older families occupy houses, which, although detached from their neighbors, are substantially urban rather than suburban dwellings. Nevertheless, on the whole, the well-to-do western business

accessible from the man's place of business, and is occupied both summer and winter. It has enough land around it to permit the enjoyment of some of the pleasures of the country, and to afford an opportunity for a certain amount of landscape treatment; but this land is and can be nothing but the front and back



THE HOUSE OF MR. J. ROSENWALD.

No. 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago.

Nimmons &amp; Fellows, Architects

yard of the house. As an architectural type it is intermediate between the town and country house.

The Rosenwald House is a typical example of this class of dwelling, and it is also an excellent example thereof. It exhibits some of the best tendencies which are found in the design of such buildings. It is a fine, large house, surrounded by abundant land, and

The fact that this outdoor play-room is only partly screened from the street suggests one of the most interesting and important questions connected with the design of houses of this class—the question, that is, whether the grounds should or should not be enclosed by a wall. There can be no doubt that from the point of view of the most interesting and complete architectural treatment of



DETAIL IN THE HOUSE OF MR. J. ROSENWALD.

No. 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago.

Nimmons & Fellows, Architects.

treated in a manner appropriate to its location on a street. The house itself has been situated as near the street as its height would permit, and consequently much the larger part of the grounds are available for a garden and tennis court situated in the rear. This arrangement gives the inhabitants a pleasant play-ground, partly screened from the street, and spacious enough for all kinds of country sports and pleasures.

these places, there should be an enclosure. That is the one way in which the house and its grounds can be architecturally united, and that is the one way in which irrelevant and incongruous surroundings can be shut off from the garden. Without the enclosing wall the occupants of the house can never come into complete possession of their grounds; and the architect can never tell how soon his most carefully-designed landscape scheme will be spoiled by the

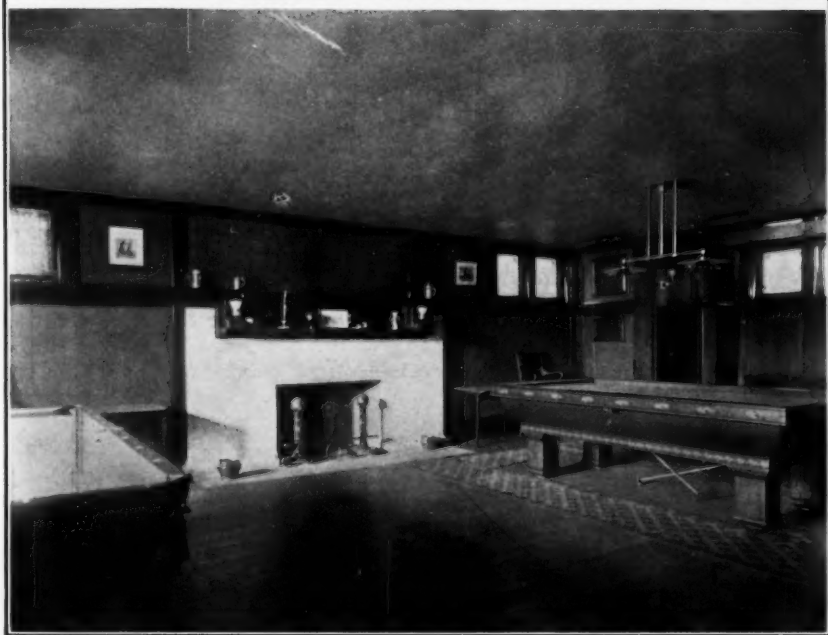


HALL AND LIVING-ROOM.  
The House of Mr. J. Rosenwald.

No. 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago.

Nimmons & Fellows, Architects.





DINING-ROOM AND BILLIARD-ROOM.

The House of Mr. J. Rosenwald.

No. 4901 Ellis Avenue, Chicago.

Nimmons & Fellows, Architects.

architectural performances of some neighbor. The preservation of the æsthetic individuality of such a suburban place demands the enclosure of the grounds.

In a great many cases these enclosing walls have been constructed, but probably in the majority of instances they are omitted. They run counter to the popular American preference for a semi-public private life. To shut your neighbors off absolutely from the yard of your house strikes the ordinary American as exclusive and "stuck-up;" and it is not an easy matter to wean him from this conception. Of course, as a matter of fact, there is no more reason why an outdoor playground should not be kept as private as an indoor living-room; but so far the practice of walling in the grounds around a house has the force of custom against it. Whatever the motive in the present instance, the architect has managed to secure a fair amount of privacy without the use of an enclosure. Not only are the garden and tennis court screened by the house, but the shrubbery at either end of the building will, when it has obtained its full growth, still further protect the "back-yard" from a passer-by on the street. The treatment of the garden back of the house is adapted to the absence of any enclosure. In fact, it can hardly be said that there is any garden at all. In the middle of the large stretch of lawn, and on an axis with the enclosed porch, a rectangular space has been sunk; and in the center of this space is a pool with a flower-bed at either end.

The house is plain and even severe in treatment, and it has dignity without the slightest pretension. It is simply an interesting and very careful piece of brick-work, without any of the stone trimmings, with which so many eastern architects like to spot and line surface of their brick walls. A single course of stone marks the line of the ground floor, and the window sills are similarly distinguished. That is all. The windows are small and not capped by any ornamental members whatsoever. The only important ornamental feature of

the building is a strong string-course of terra cotta, cutting off the top floor from the rest of the building; and this is well, because the top floor evidently contains a large number of small rooms, and is consequently distinguished from the other floors by the numerous windows which its plan demands. The entrance porch is treated with the same simplicity and the same respect for the dominant material. Its appearance is not complicated and falsified by any scheme of applied decoration; and the two columns which hold the lintel have a structural function. Its whole effect would perhaps be a little austere for the majority of Eastern house-owners; but it is a salutary thing that the Western architect can sometimes dispense with decorative irrelevancies, which are so often demanded and supplied in the East.

The architecture of the interior is characterized by the same plain consistent treatment. There are no imported mantel-pieces, no white paint, none of the carpenter's version of classic and Renaissance detail, no Gothic ceilings, and no "period" furnishing. The finish is simple and substantial throughout. All the rooms are more or less completely paneled, and when the paneling does not cover the walls, the intervening spaces are treated generally with a solid color. The lines of the beams and of the cornice are very strong, and are so managed that the different parts are tied well together. The wood-work is stained a dark brown; none of the ordinary classic mouldings are used; and no doors are hung between the principal rooms. One apartment opens into another without the interruption even of "portières, and the reader will notice that no curtains keep out the light from the windows, which serves to explain the smallness of these openings. A pleasant sense of being spacious, of being conveniently planned, and well connected pervades these apartments. They are a worthy example of an architect's interior; and if the effect of the inside is like the effect of the outside, a little austere, it is, on the other hand, not in the least negative, or flat, or attenuated.

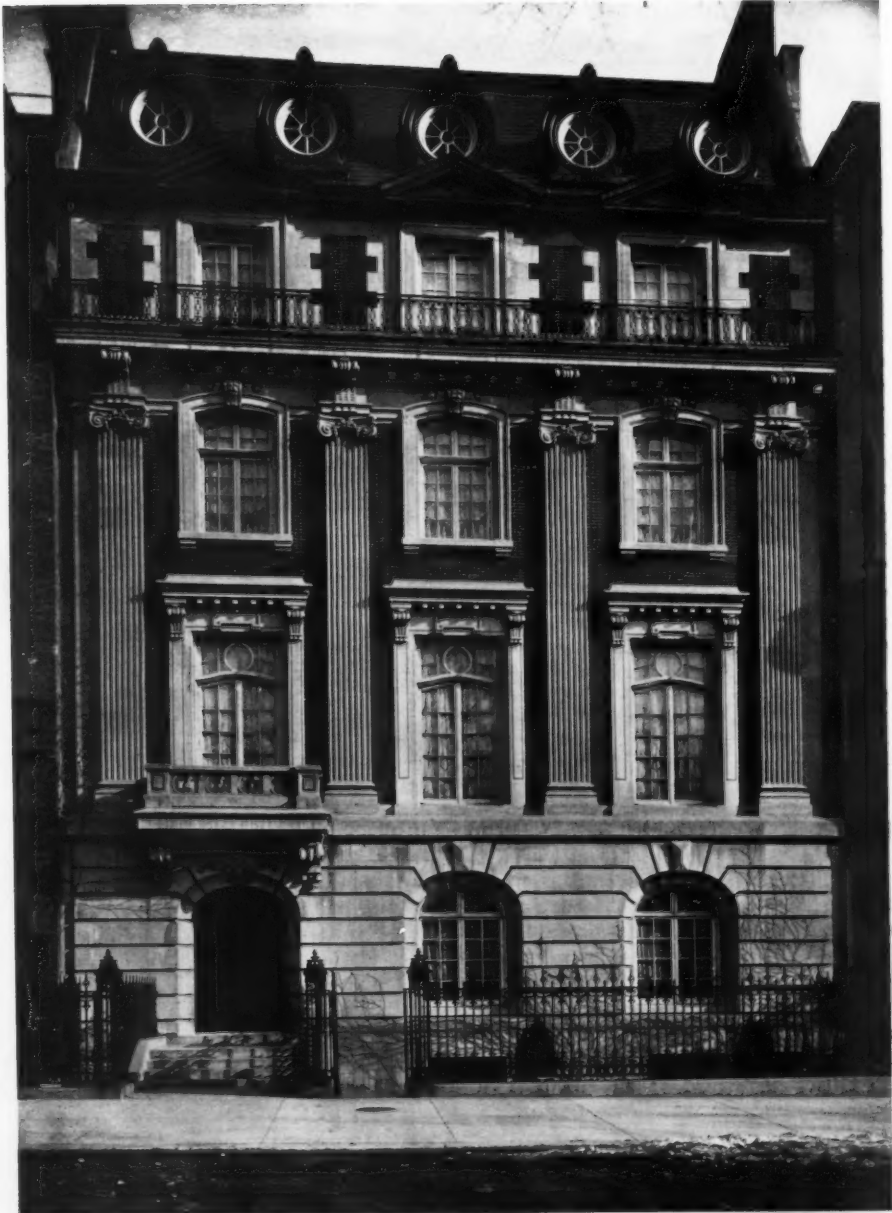
## The House of Mr. Jacob H. Schiff.

The house of Mr. Jacob H. Schiff, some of the most important rooms of which are reproduced herewith, speaks for itself. Its interior is the work of a leading firm of interior decorators in New York City; and it has been finished according to the ideas which are recognized as the regular thing for this class of work. It may, indeed, be regarded as an excellent type of the house which is designed and furnished for a man of great wealth. Its prevailing character is that of an impersonal and stately magnificence; and an effect of this kind is not without its fitness, because the banking house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., with which Mr. Schiff is connected, has already reached in the mind of the public the position of a great institution. The proprietor of this house, following the example of other rich men, has wished to have the interior of his dwelling a faithful reproduction of one or more of the authentic historic styles—a task which the decorator was well qualified to perform. The apartments are all examples of "period" design and furnishing; and the occupants of the house have loyally supported the designer by not intruding on the spectacle incongruous decorations and conveniences.

The drawing-room, for instance, is a complete realization of this point of view in interior decoration. It is a room belonging almost exclusively to the Louis XV. period, both in the design of the walls and in the character of the furnishing. The walls are, of course, paneled to the ceiling, and are finished a rich ivory white. The gold of the raised decorations is subdued to a dull tone, and thereby loses the merely gaudy effect, so often characteristic of gilt decorations. The draperies of silk velour are embroidered in gold and show the same rose crimson color as

the carpet, which is in several tones. The furniture is upholstered partly in this velour, and partly in tapestry. The large panels on the walls are filled with silk tapestries surrounded by a rose-crimson border. These tapestries, it is interesting to note, are of American make. They were wrought at Williamsbridge, New York, from designs after the style of Boucher, specially prepared for this room. The only object in the apartment which jars the spectator's sense of historical propriety is the piano, which should also have been specially designed for the period.

The other two rooms shown are the foyer hall and the dining-room. The most striking feature of the former is the carved Istrian marble mantel-piece—a very beautiful piece in itself, although not quite in scale. The bronze plaque framed in by the shelf is the well-known relief of Mr. Schiff's children, made some eighteen years ago, by Augustus St. Gaudens. The wall-covering is a rich crimson moire silk, and is intended as a background for upholstery of verdure-tapestry, in which the sofa and chairs are finished. The dining-room does not belong so much to any one period, and takes on the sober hue with which so many people like to be surrounded when at table. The walls and the ceiling are both paneled in mahogany, with which the dark green tones of the hangings, carpet and leather is entirely harmonious. The mantel-piece of campan melange marble, with its gilt bronze mouldings, is particularly handsome and striking, and the cabinets for glass and silver have evidently been specially designed to fill the spaces they occupy. The photographs are taken to show details, and fail to give the general effect of the room, which is as complete in its way as is that of the drawing-room.



THE HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Patzig.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.



DRAWING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Patzig.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Decorated by William Baumgarten & Co.





DINING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Patzig.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Decorated by William Baumgarten &amp; Co.



MANTELPiece IN THE DINING-ROOM—HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Patzig.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Decorated by William Baumgarten & Co.



HALLWAY IN THE HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Patzig.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.

William Baumgarten & Co., Decorators.



DRAWING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. JACOB H. SCHIFF.

Photo by A. Faizig

Decorated by William Baumgarten & Co.

Fifth Avenue, New York City.



No. 6448 MINERVA AVENUE.

Chicago, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.



## Three Houses by Mr. Robert C. Spencer, Jr.

The three houses, designed by Mr. Robert C. Spencer, illustrated herewith, deserve careful attention. They are good examples of Western work of the better sort—of the sort, that is, which combines a certain freedom of treatment, not so often found in the East, with a disposition to remain faithful to desirable traditions of residence design. The problems presented by the several houses are very different; but the several treatments of these problems possess much the same qualities. In each instance the forms used are simple and straightforward and well adapted to the peculiarities of the site. They bespeak on the part of Mr. Spencer an individual point of view, and considerable powers of design. In the balance of qualities the evidences of a certain refinement of personality and delicacy of feeling bulk larger than those of a strictly and vigorously architectural manner of thought; but the disproportion is not troublesome. Work, which possesses as much individuality combined with as many signs of good ideas and training as that of Mr. Spencer, is entitled to every consideration.

The house at No. 6448 Minerva Ave., Chicago, is a small, modest two-story and attic building, situated immediately on the street, and especially designed for this location. The architect has taken advantage of every opportunity for variety of effect and for saliency of treatment. The entrance porch instead of being merely applied to the building is really attached to it by its enclosure within a wall running parallel to the building. This wall is broken by posts marking the entrance, and is capped by a course of white stone. The overhang of the roof with its strong shadow helps the wall of the porch to line the house up with the street, while at the same time it assists the white window and door frames to provide agreeable contrasts on the front of the little

building. The effect of the roof is a little like that of a man who pulls a broad-brimmed hat down over his eyes; but such men usually make an interesting appearance. The interior of this house is very attractive in its excellent use of comparatively small spaces, and in its simple and consistent treatment. The living and dining-rooms are practically one apartment, separated by bookcases standing out into the room as screens. But while separated by these bookcases, they are united by similarity in the lines and the effect of the wood-work, the character of which harmonizes with the "Mission" furniture of the room. It is very rare to find a house as small as this which is so completely designed and finished. Even the tables and chairs in the "Mission" style are well selected both for comfort and to avoid the ordinary uncouth solidity of this kind of thing.

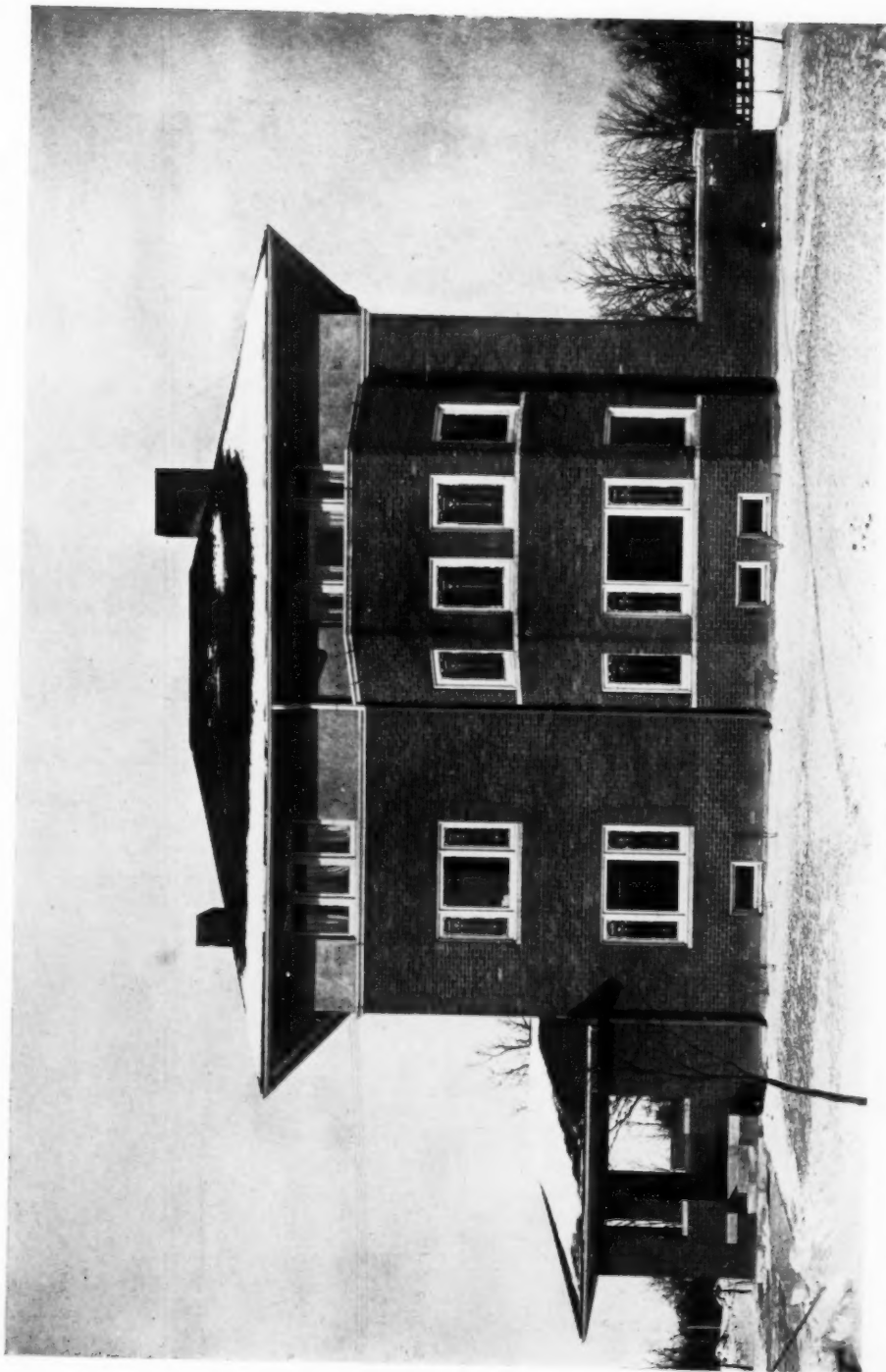
The house at Milwaukee is much larger, and is detached from its neighbors. The size of the lot is, however, not large enough to permit much of any landscape treatment, and the design is adapted to the suburban character of the surroundings. Like Mr. Spencer's other work it is marked by simplicity and refinement. It is a plain, honest piece of brick-work, varied, like the Chicago house, by white wood-work and crowned by a roof with an overhang that makes a strong shadow. The upper story is cut off from the two lower stories and joined to the crowning member by a string course of white stone, and by being made of plaster instead of brick. The arrangement is attractive; but its attractiveness is diminished by the way in which the upper line of bay window cuts off the windows of the third story. It would have been better to have kept the front flat, and also, if possible, to have given the plaster some modest surface decoration. Altogether, however, this is a very legitimate piece



LIVING AND DINING-ROOMS.

No. 6448 Minerva Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

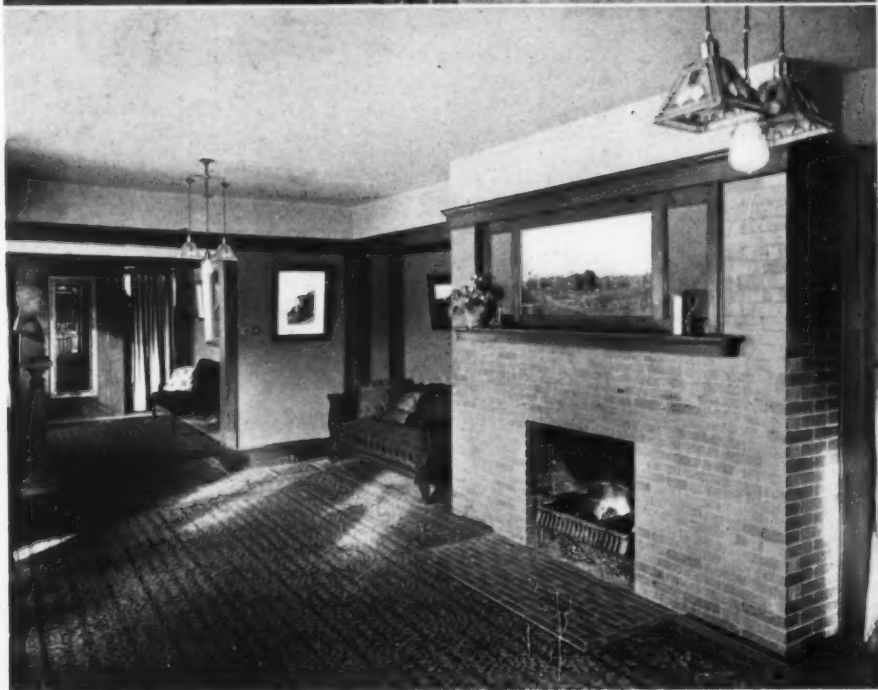
Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.



THE HOUSE OF MR. ROBERT SPENCER.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



HALL AND DINING-ROOM—HOUSE OF MR. ROBERT SPENCER.  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.

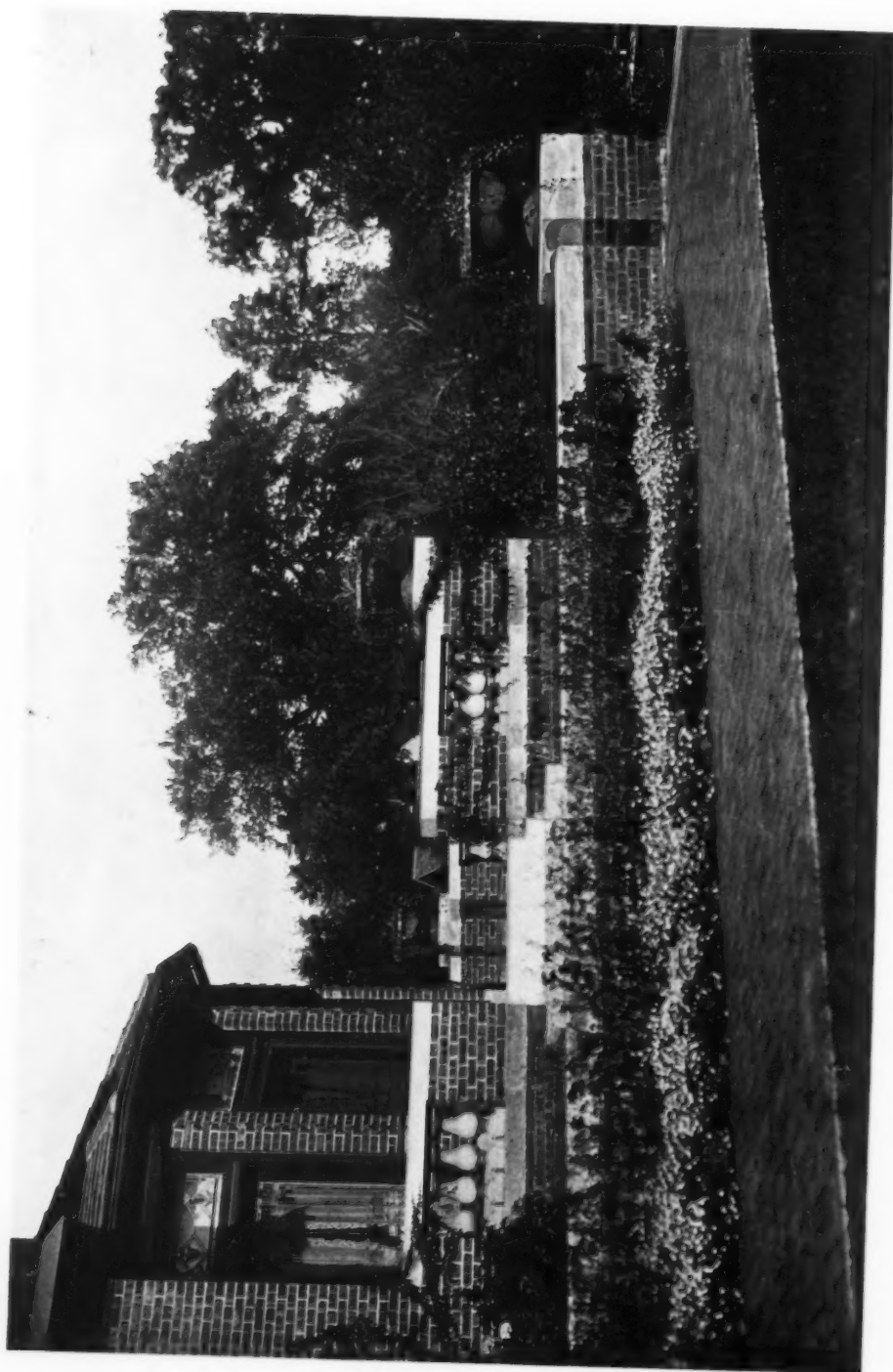


RESIDENCE OF MR. U. F. ORENDOFF.  
Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Canton, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.





RESIDENCE OF MR. U. F. ORENDORFF.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Canton, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.



RESIDENCE OF MR. U. F. ORENDORFF.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Canton, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.

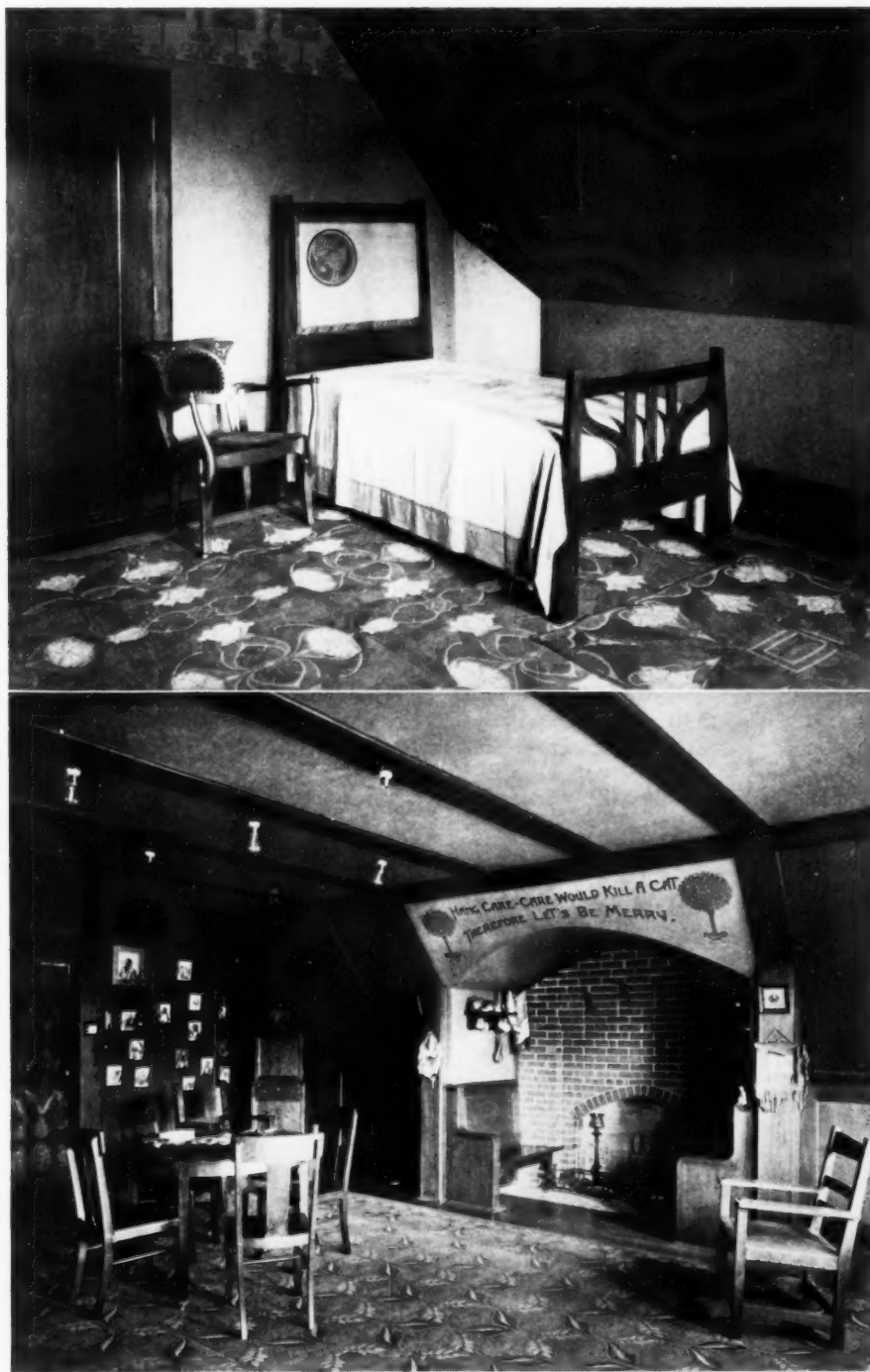


LIVING AND DINING-ROOMS—RESIDENCE OF MR. U. F. ORENDORFF.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Canton, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.



BEDROOM AND DEN —RESIDENCE OF MR. U. F. ORENDORFF.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Canton, Ill.

Robert C. Spencer, Jr., Architect.

of work, and one which has a chance of also becoming charming—as soon as the bleakness of the surroundings is properly relieved.

It is, however, in the Orendorff residence at Canton, Ill., that Mr. Spencer has had his best opportunity and his most conspicuous success. In this instance the site is large enough to afford a chance for landscape treatment, while at the same time it is so near its neighbors that it cannot be considered as an isolated country place. Mr. Spencer has managed admirably to adapt the design of the house, and the lay-out of the ground to a situation which is countrified without being entirely in the country. The long line of the house is parallel to the public road, from which the grounds of Mr. Orendorff is separated by a brick wall, low enough to give definiteness of enclosure, but not high enough to seem exclusive. The house is approached by a straight driveway, which turns in to the back of the house, but which is reached from the front of the house by a brick walk running the whole length of the façade. The building is situated on a slightly higher level than this brick walk—a level which is emphasized by a stone terrace, from which the rooms of the house are entered by a couple of stone steps. The entrance proper is at some distance from the road, and is marked by

the projection of large gabled room over the brick and stone terrace, carried by plain brick piers. The design may be classified as a free example of half-timbered work, which is sufficiently picturesque and irregular to look well in the background of the neighboring foliage, but which at the same time is a well-balanced composition. The effect of the place seems to the writer to be wholly charming. The immediate surroundings of the house have been formally treated; but the formality has never for a moment degenerated into emptiness and rigidity. The house is at home on its site; the land round about has been kept genuinely natural in appearance. There are very few semi-suburban houses in this country in which such a balance of desirable qualities has been preserved. The interiors are, perhaps, less successful than the exterior. They show Mr. Spencer's customary preference for a simple, consistent scheme, which in the case of the living-room has the appearance of being original as well as attractive; but the value of this scheme has not been preserved in the somewhat incongruous furniture and hangings. The dining-room is more consistently realized; and the other apartments look as if Mr. Spencer had been a little fancy free in this house, which is, of course, a good thing to be.

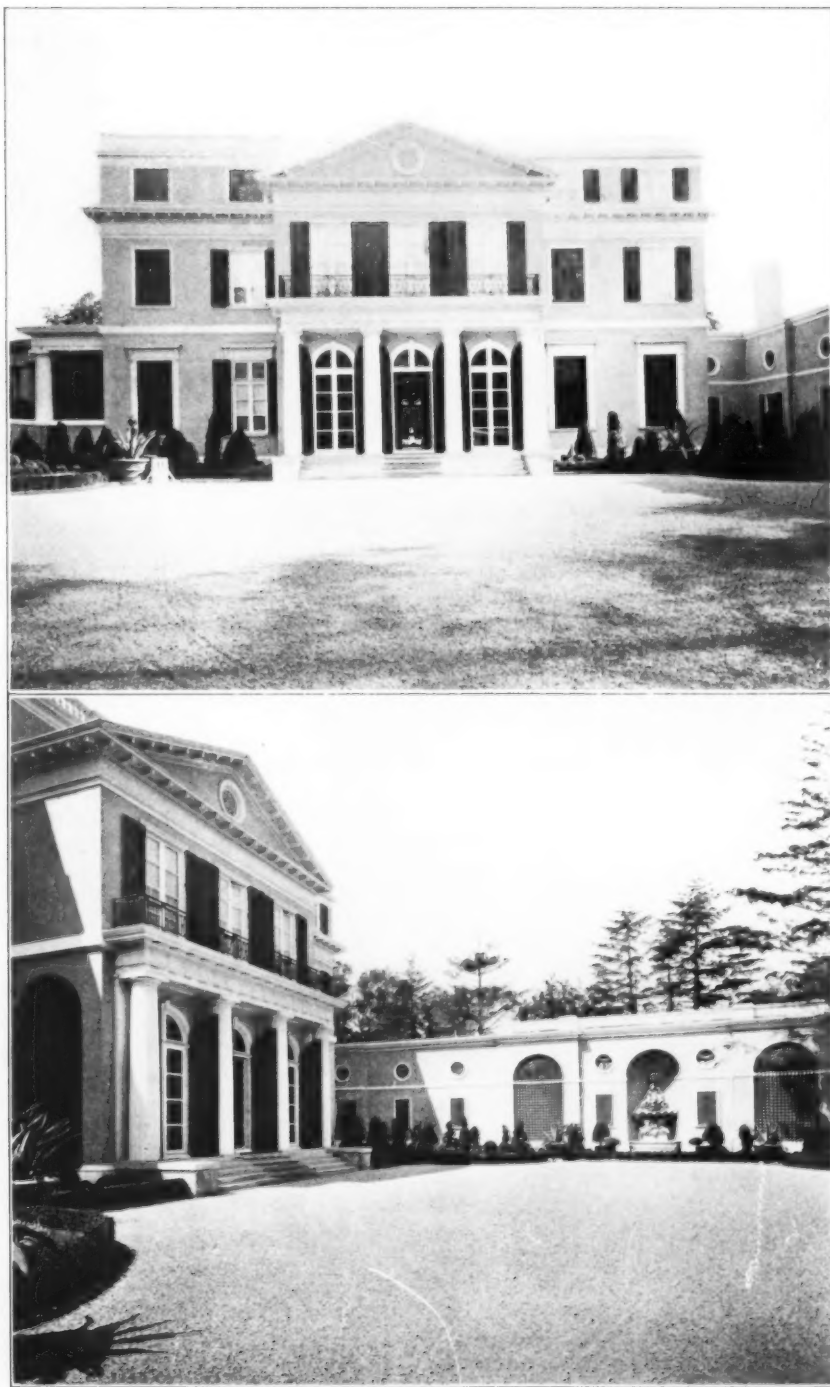


## Some Interesting Interiors.

Few architects practicing in New York have had of late years a larger number of interesting interiors to design than Mr. Ogden Codman, Jr. While his opportunities have been by no means confined exclusively to interior work, his reputation has been made chiefly as a designer and decorator of rooms, and the extent to which old houses are renovated and freshly decorated in New York has afforded him a very large field for proper cultivation. The two houses illustrated herewith of Mr. Codman's are both of them old houses, which have been placed in his hands for renovation. In the Newport house he has done over the exterior as well as the interior, but in the case of the house in New York the exterior is not reproduced, because it is an old brown-stone front, which betrays little for which the designer is responsible. The most cursory examination of the illustrations will show that the architect of these rooms is possessed of a very definite and consistent point of view. In the first place, they are not merely decorated; they are thoroughly designed—designed in a strictly and properly architectural sense. There is no display of furniture, fabrics, or properties for their own sakes. All these minor sources of effect are subordinated to a scheme of architectural decoration, which dominates the room and in which the important members are the doors, mantelpieces, cornices, the ceiling, and the like. In the second place, Mr. Codman rarely, if ever, derives his scheme from any particular historical style of decoration. He remains, indeed, faithful to the principles of interior design, upon which these historical styles are based; but he uses the familiar materials and motives with the utmost freedom. His rooms fulfil a good tradition;

but they fulfil it in their own way. If anything they are modern French in their suggestion. His preference for white or cream wood work and for marble mantelpieces of French design, as well as the general atmosphere of the rooms, go to make up this suggestion of a French alliance; but the rooms are French in the best meaning of the word. They are French, that is, in their simplicity, their precision, and in their neatness of effect; but they are free from the faults of excessive elaboration of design and scale of detail, which is characteristic of so much modern French work.

It will be seen from the above, that in our opinion Mr. Codman's rooms exhibit many admirable qualities; yet it must be added that in spite of these qualities, his interiors cannot be recommended as entirely safe models of design. They possess refinement, consistency and atmosphere; they are apartments in which the aspect of being pleasant and habitable has not been eliminated by any asceticism of architectural treatment. At the same time they make an impression upon the writer of being unnecessarily thin and flat. The design in itself is correct, and something more; but it is not positive and telling, and the means which the architect has taken to give variety and interest to the walls have an air almost of frivolity. While the detail which Mr. Codman applies so freely to his panels is dainty, it is also trivial, and it is mostly superfluous. The whole effect gains variety at the expense of virility, and when it is compared with that of the best rooms of modern American designers, one feels the lack of the liveliness which Mr. Stanford White and others have succeeded in imparting to their successful apartments.

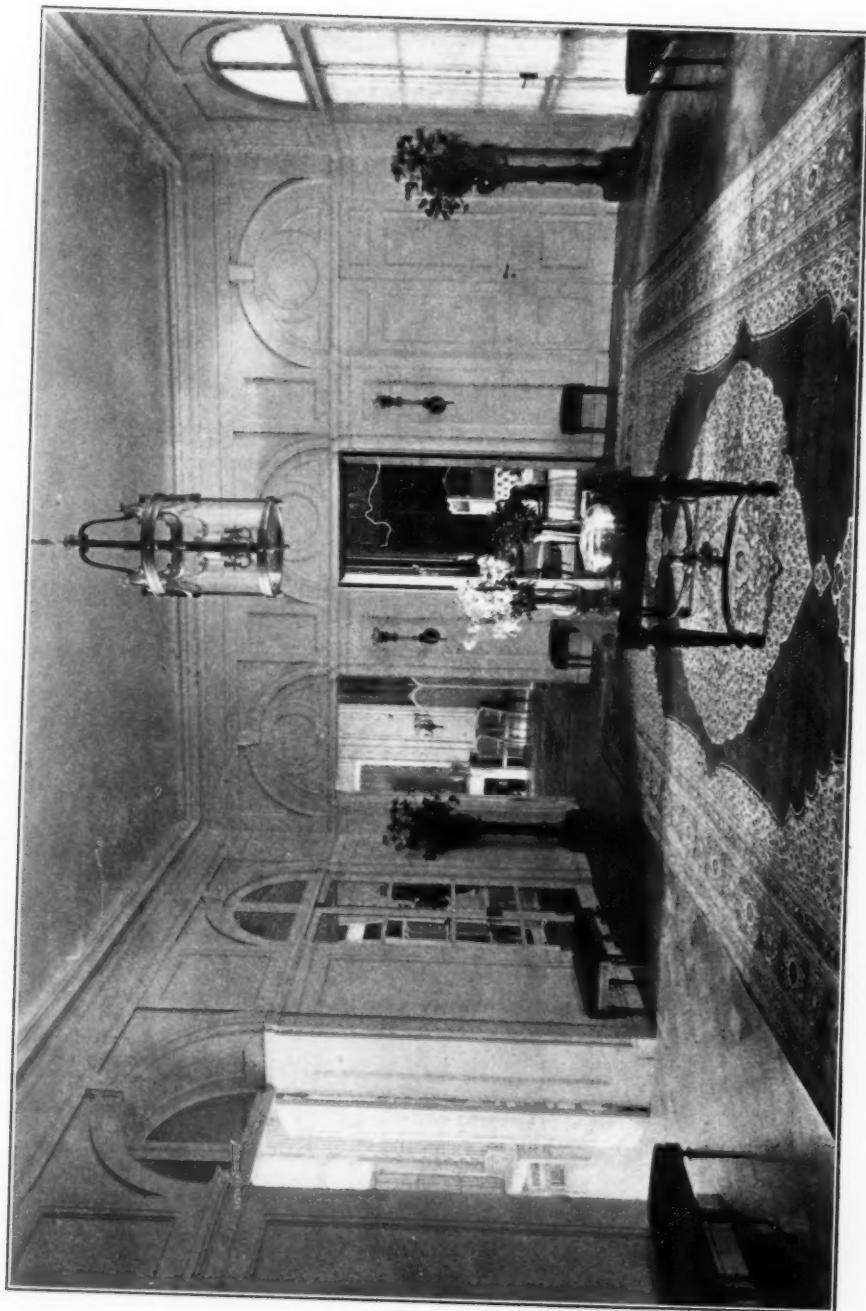


EXTERIOR OF THE MORSE HOUSE.

Photos by Alman &amp; Co.

Newport, R. I.

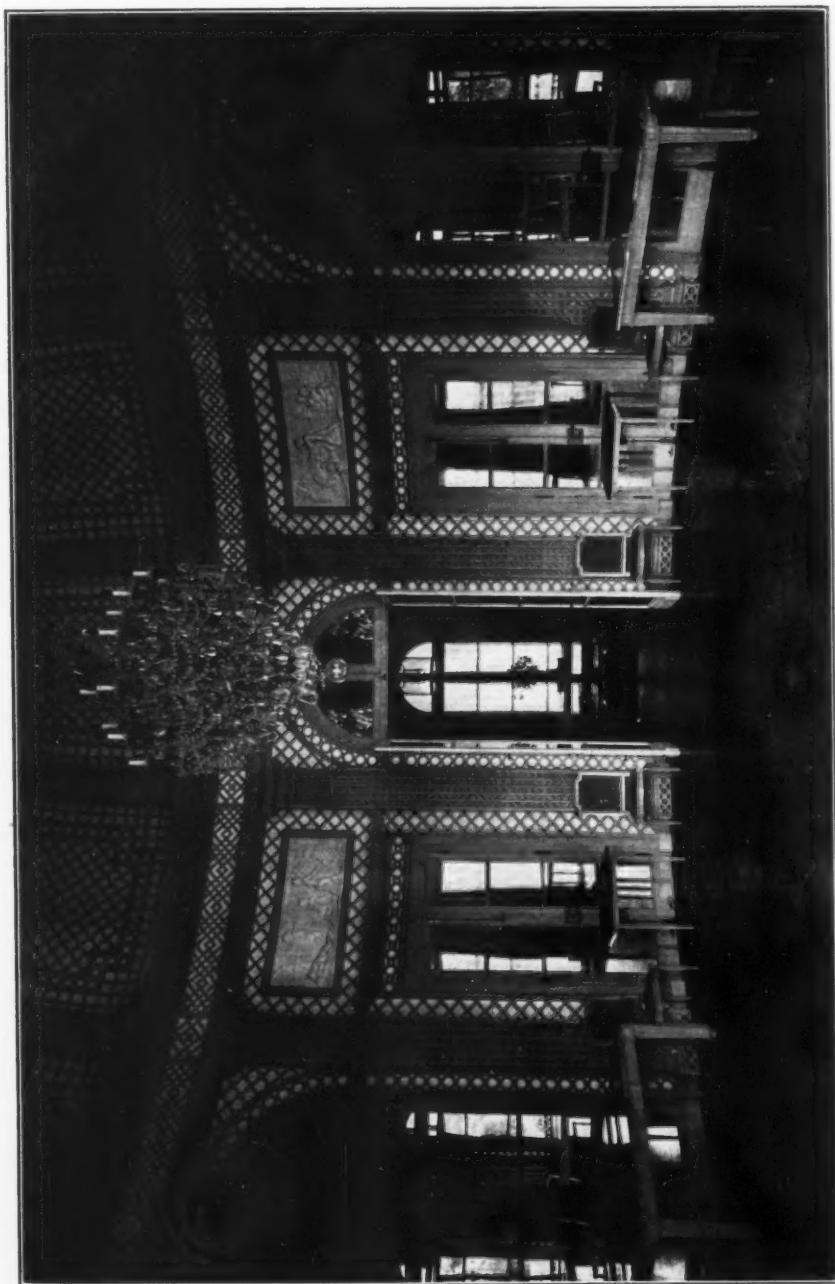
Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.



HALL IN THE MORSE HOUSE.  
Photo by Alman & Co.

Newport, R. I.

Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.



BALL-ROOM IN THE MORSE HOUSE.

Photo by Alman &amp; Co.

Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.

Newport, R. I.



DINING-ROOM IN THE MORSE HOUSE.

Photo by Alman & Co.

Newport, R. I.

Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.





LIVING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. VICTOR SORCHAN.

Photo by Alman & Co.

Madison Avenue, New York City.

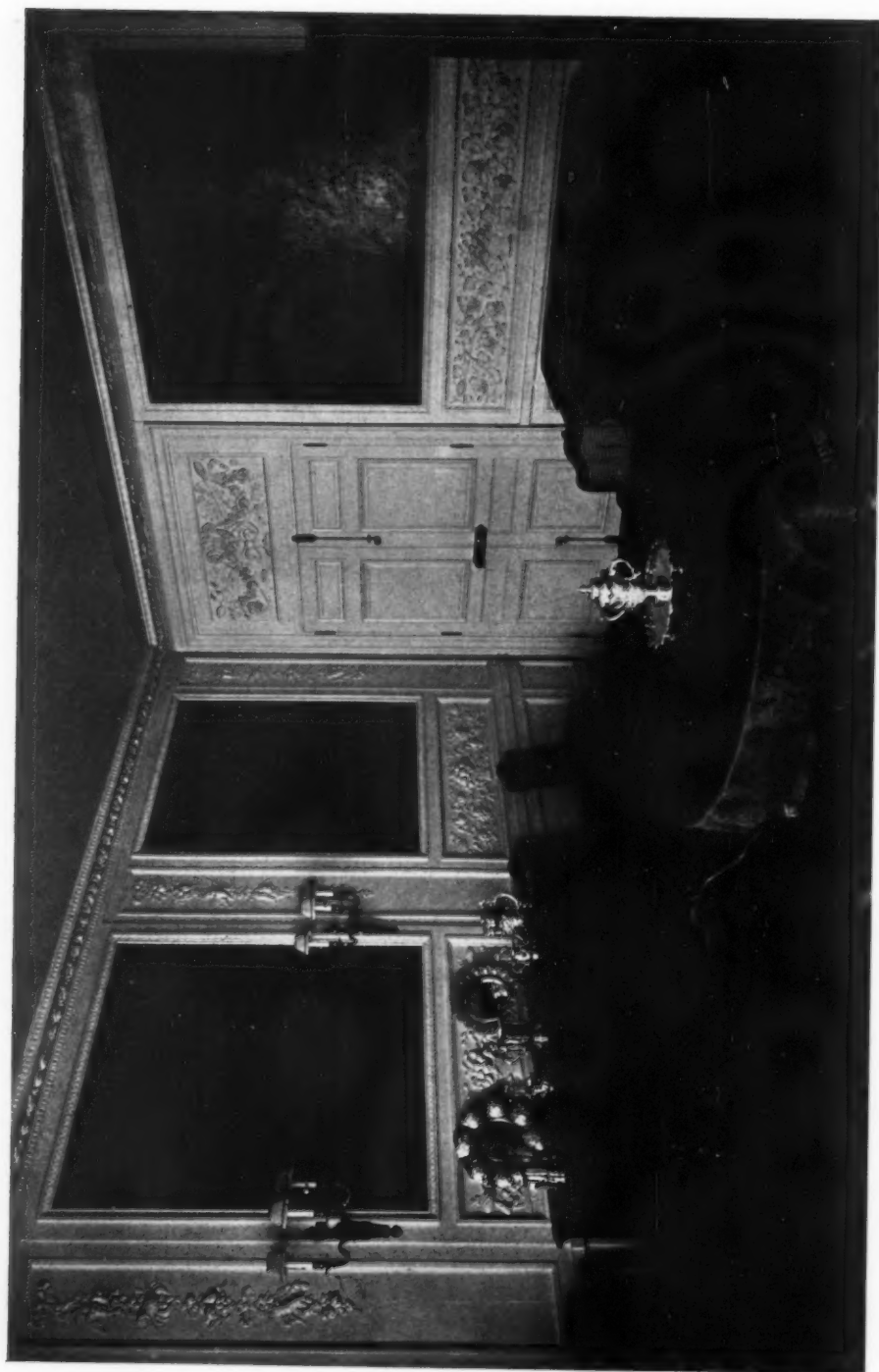
Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.



ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. VICTOR SORCHAN.  
Photo by Alman & Co.

Madison Avenue, New York City.

Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.



DINING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. VICTOR SORCHAN.

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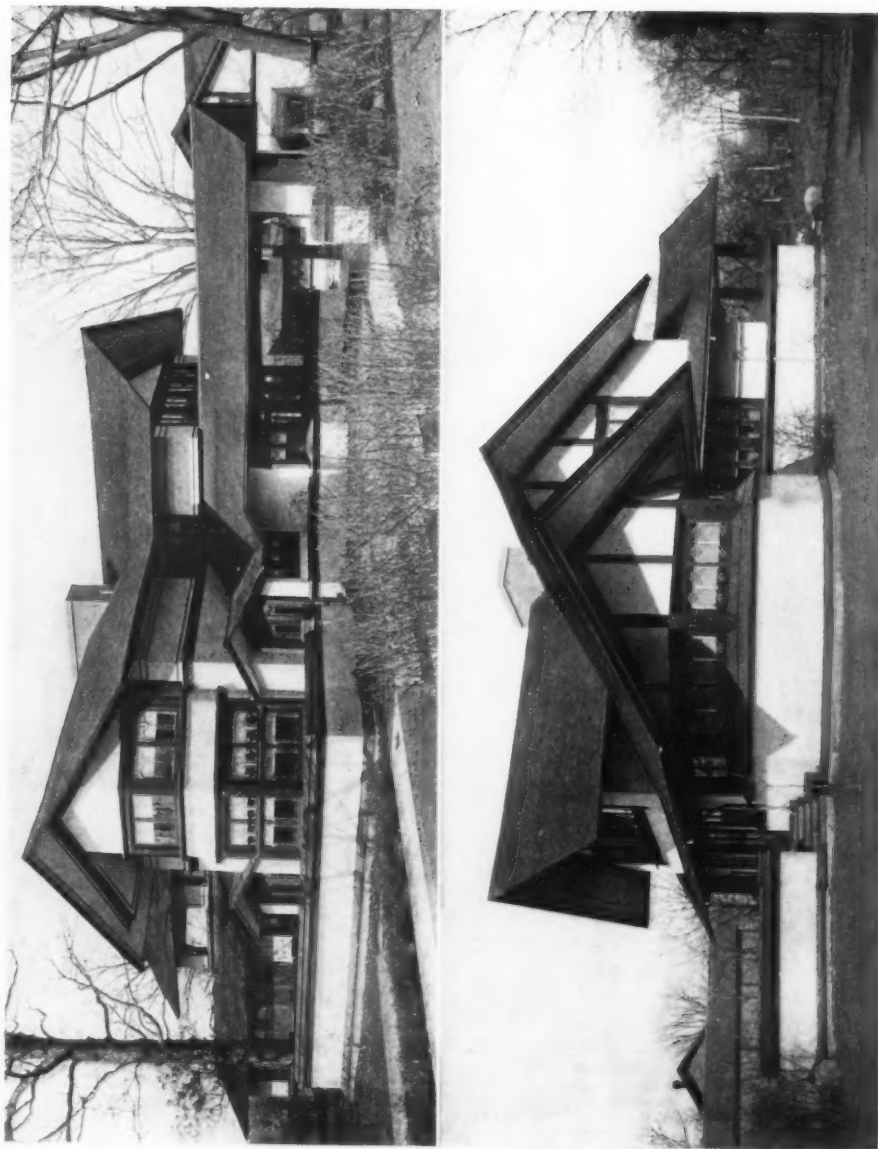
Ogden Colman, Jr., Architect.



DINING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF MR. VICTOR SORCHAN.  
Photo by Alman & Co.

Madison Avenue, New York City.

Ogden Codman, Jr., Architect.



THE BRADLEY AND HOCKIN HOUSES.

Photos by Henry Fuermann.

Kankakee, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.



## ✓ Work of Frank Lloyd Wright— Its Influence.

No collection of reproductions of American houses, in which it is proposed to include certain typical phases of contemporary American domestic architecture, would be complete without some exhibition of the work of Mr. Frank Lloyd Wright, of Chicago. The houses he has designed imperatively claim attention, not only because of their startling qualities, but because of the influence they have had. Mr. Wright, indeed, stands

of the quality of the material in its treatment, and a basis for architectural ornament, less stereotyped and artificial than that which the majority of architects use. Mr. Wright is by no means the only designer of dwellings who has been influenced by these ideas; but his expression of them is particularly uncompromising and conspicuous. His work is nothing if not individual and original; and its startling peculiarities have naturally made it attract more at-



THE WILLET RESIDENCE.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Highland Park, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.

more prominently than does any other Western architect, whose work has consisted chiefly in designing residences, for the ideas and tendencies, which have been embodied mainly in business buildings, by Mr. Louis Sullivan. Those ideas and tendencies are similar to the ideas which have given form to the "new art" of France and Germany. In their application to architecture, the attempt is to secure a more truthful relation between structure and design, a franker expression

tention than the work of other architects, who have sought to express similar ideas, without breaking so completely away from the prevailing traditions. The strongly individual character of Mr. Wright's work, however, has made its direct influence somewhat dangerous. Whenever it has been imitated it is Mr. Wright's manner, rather than the substantial value of his work, which has been copied; and imitation of this kind generally turns out badly. The manner is exaggerated, and a useful but

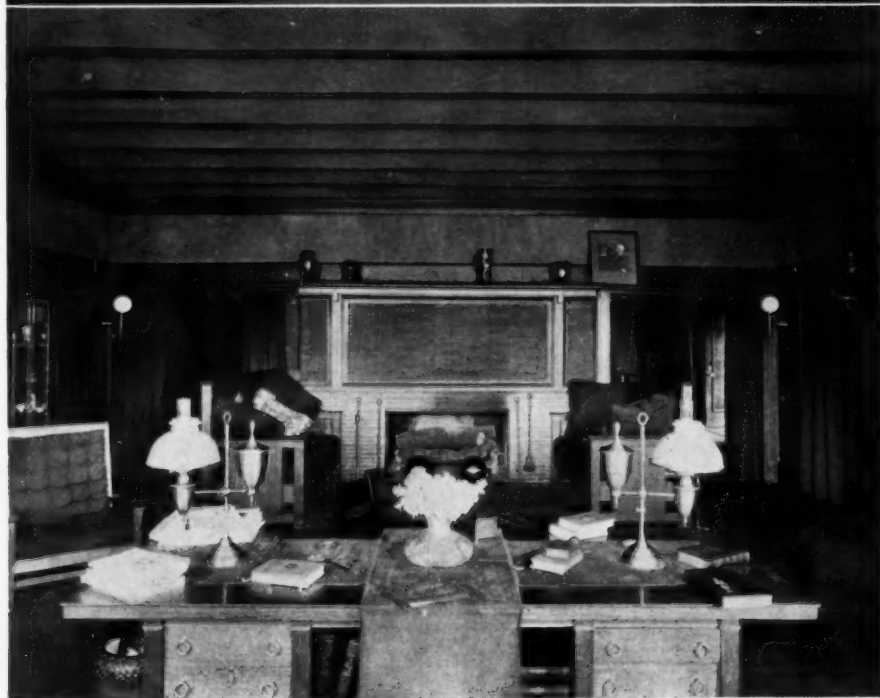


DINING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF B. H. BRADLEY.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.

Kankakee, Ill.



LIVING-ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF B. H. BRADLEY.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Kankakee, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.

somewhat perilous tendency in design becomes a subject for ridicule.

The remarkable fact, however, about Mr. Wright's work is that, although it is so experimental in origin and so startling in effect, it remains on the whole so legitimate—so free from arbitrary and capricious qualities. Not that Mr. Wright does not at times exaggerate his own peculiar manner and design houses, which, in spite of their cleverness, suggest the distortions of some of his imitators. But the erring instances are comparatively rare. Mr.

one's own taste, it must be admitted that the issue has confirmed the experiment. Different as are Mr. Wright's buildings from the current practice either in this country or abroad, they preserve a sound tradition of proportion and ornament; and any one who believes that it is not something of an achievement to combine so much originality with so much legitimacy should compare Mr. Wright's houses with those committed by the Darmstadt school of German architects. Mr. Wright's designs are neither bizarre nor



RESIDENCE OF A. J. HUSSER.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Buena Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.

Wright possesses a native sense of good form, which corrects sufficiently any leaning in the direction of extravagance, associated with his desire to depart from customary architectural forms; and he has established what may be called a personal tradition, which circumscribes the area of his experimentation. His experiments have not been wild, uninformed, and fruitless. They have been justified by persistent repetition, and gradual improvement. Repetition has resulted in the elimination of fanciful excrescences, both in design and in ornament; and whether the type of residence which Mr. Wright has wrought does or does not appeal to

academic, and yet they are wholly his own.

The characteristics of Mr. Wright's style may be summed up in a few words. He likes long low buildings, or groups of buildings, fitted tight to the ground by heavy overhanging roofs. The roofs are the most conspicuous feature of the building, and in spite of their great expanse are never broken by dormers. Their pitch and the deep shadows thrown by the overhang, make them very picturesque; but they are not cocked up or restless. The slope of the main roof and those of the porch or out buildings, and the strong horizontal string courses on the walls all tend to

keep the house down upon its site. The windows and other openings are grouped in a way, which may be inconvenient at times to the people who occupy the dwelling, but which from the outside gives an abundance of interesting wall surface. In fact, these houses frequently have the appearance of sacrificing the comfort of the interior plan to the interest of the exterior design; but the outside observer need not quarrel with such a sacrifice. The exteriors are certainly highly interesting; and they are so because every mass, surface, shadow, and detail con-

clients, who insist upon having their houses designed in some particular style, or who fail to understand the æsthetic impossibility of certain coveted arrangements that it is very rare to find the work of any designer characterized by such complete consistency as that of Mr. Wright. He also must have had the sort of client, who wanted a Mediæval castle; and it may be well to pause and consider for a moment how he has been able to reconcile the uncompromising rigor of his style with the satisfaction which he has evidently given to a large number of clients.



STABLE OF THE WILLET RESIDENCE.

Photo by Henry Fuermann.

Highland Park, Ill.

Frank Lloyd Wright, Architect.

tribute to one consistent and spectacular effect. The kitchen yards even, which according to the usual practice are concealed, wherever possible, behind a line of shrubbery, are worked frankly and successfully into the designs, and help to give the buildings that semi-pyramidal appearance, towards which Mr. Wright is always aiming; and striking as are the details, contrasts and episodes of his designs they are all subordinated to the triumphant domination of vigorous masses and salient lines.

The American architect is so frequently troubled with unfortunate

Without pretending to any inside information in the matter, we surmise that Mr. Wright is able to command the good faith and confidence of his clients, not only by his evident sincerity and disinterestedness, but also, by a certain vivid emotional interest which the man imparts to his work. He himself has feeling; he can embody this feeling in his favorite forms; and he can awaken a corresponding feeling in the people whom he serves. His work consequently is sufficiently popular as well as legitimate and original; and whatever its influence has been in the past, it will be even more efficacious in the future.





THE MCKINLOCK HOUSE.

Photos by Henry Fuermann.

Lake Forest, Ill.

Handy &amp; Cady, Architects.

## A Group of Western Residences.

The several houses, illustrations of which accompany these notes, are excellent examples of the better residential work now being done throughout the West by well-trained architects, and it is interesting to note that in spite of the disposition of the designers of that

ency is not carried to an extreme. The irregularity is not perverse or flagrant. It is moderated both by a desire to remain faithful to good traditions of domestic design, and what may be described as in general a perfectly normal state of mind. These houses may in-



LIVING-ROOM IN THE McKINLOCK HOUSE.

Lake Forest, Ill.

Handy & Cady, Architects.

region to break away from the academic traditions more prevalent in the East and take a line of their own, the character of their work is largely determined by certain common conventions. Although, as is natural among architects who are intentionally departing from an academic point of view, they tend towards irregularity and picturesqueness of effect in their exteriors, this tend-

eed be compared to the picturesque villas which were erected so plentifully at Newport and in other places along the Atlantic coast during the eighties by the very same architects who subsequently adopted a more formal habit of design, the chief difference being that the latter were chiefly shingled houses, whereas the former are of brick or plaster or both. It may be doubted, how-



The House Above is the Hamlin House, on Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, of which J. G. Rogers is the Architect.

The House Below is the McMullen Residence, at Ravinia, Ill., of which Hugh M. Garden is the Architect.



HALL AND DINING-ROOM IN THE HAMLIN HOUSE.

Photos by Henry Fuermann.

Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago.

J. G. Rogers, Architect.

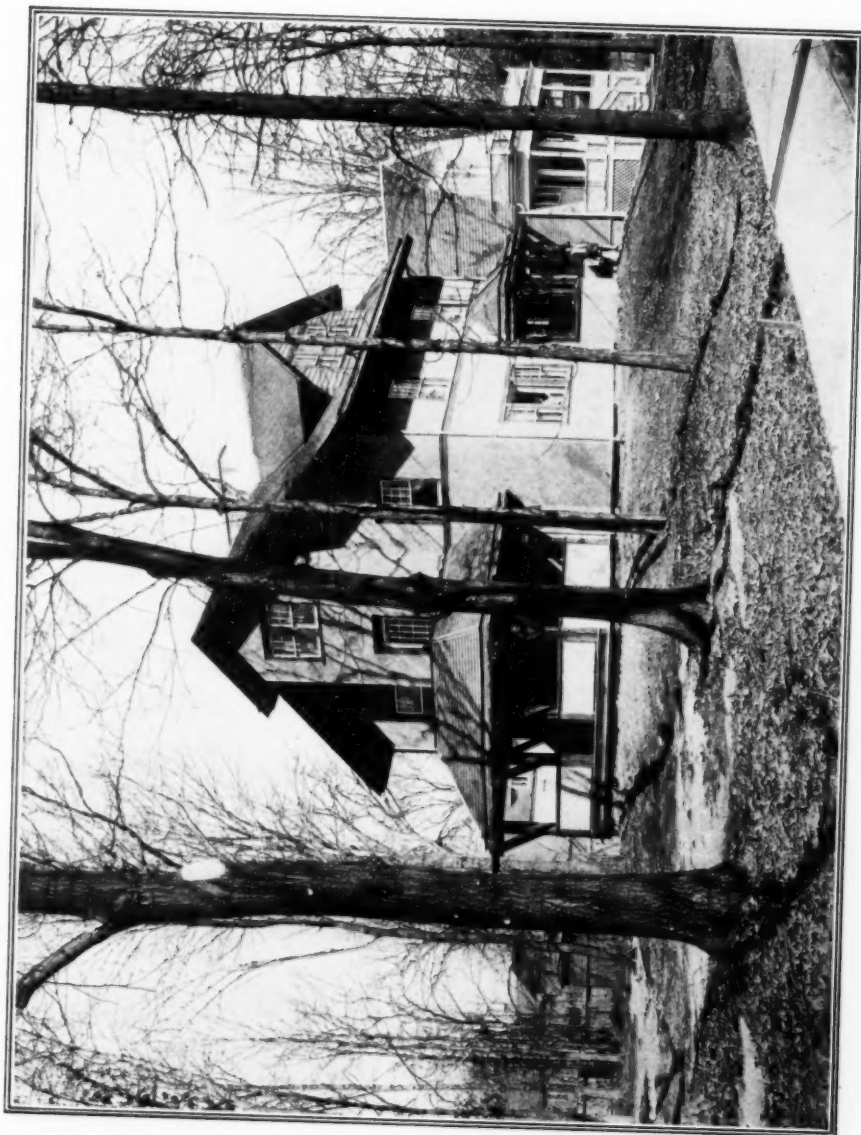


LIVING AND DINING-ROOMS IN THE McMULLEN HOUSE.

Ravinia, Ill.

Hugh M. Garden, Architect.





THE RESIDENCE OF DWIGHT H. PERKINS.

Dwight H. Perkins, Architect.

Evanston, Ill.



LIVING-ROOM IN THE RESIDENCE OF DWIGHT H. PERKINS.  
Evanston, Ill.

Dwight H. Perkins, Architect.

ever, whether the Western architects will follow the example of their Eastern fore-runners, and become more academic as they become older. In that very complicated and diverse group of ideas and forces, which we call American life, it is natural and wholesome that the East should cleave to the European and academic point of view, while the West should seek more vigorously to express local ideas and conditions. These two points of view cannot help but act and react on each other in an edifying way, provided neither is pushed to a perverse and meaningless extreme.

Mingled with the tendency towards irregularity and picturesqueness in designing the masses of their houses, the better Western architects are also seeking to simplify the forms they use in certain significant ways. This leaning towards simpler forms does not always express itself in the composition of the exterior, because it is difficult to add to a house which is both irregular and picturesque the quality of fundamental simplicity. Nevertheless it is astonishing how frequently certain Western architects have succeeded in imparting a genuine unity to houses, whose chief merit is a sharp and bold picturesqueness of effect, and even when the design remains loose and consequently complicated rather than simple, it is rare that the designers fail to give simplicity to their detail. They cherish, it would seem, a greater respect for their materials than Eastern architects of the same standing. They do not try to ornament wooden columns and plaster surfaces in a manner better adapted to other materials and, their decorative detail is much less likely to be merely applied.

The general tendencies described above are, of course, only partially embodied in any particular instance. Some of the houses which illustrate other articles in this number are even better examples of them than those which are reproduced herewith. Nevertheless these four houses are fair examples of what are, on the whole, good tendencies; and if each of them taken

alone cannot be described as admirable without qualification, that is at least partly because the ideas and tendencies they represent are not as yet approaching a mature expression. The McKinlock house, for instance, at Lake Forest, Ill., is picturesque and interesting, and both in its lines and in its tone is admirably adapted to the untidy Western landscape by which it is surrounded; but like all picturesque things it is much less interesting from some points of view than from others. In the same way, while there is a certain method in its irregularities, the separate features often triumph over the general idea resident in the design. Utilities, such as chimneys and verandas, are placed wherever convenient without much reference to a place in a general design; and the same effect of careless picturesqueness is carried out in the landscape treatment and in the planting. The grounds of the McMullen residence at Ravinia, Ill., is characterized by an even more active intention not to disturb the natural surroundings of the house with any artificial formality of design. The house is merely set down in the trees. Its owners apparently wanted merely a pleasant and unpretentious home. This they have assuredly obtained; but the result, legitimate as it is within limits, does not afford much scope for critical comment. The house of Mr. Dwight Perkins at Evanston, Ill., is a better example of the tendencies outlined above than either of the other two. It is treated with simplicity and with effect; it is picturesque without being loose. On the other hand, the Hamlin house, on the outskirts of Chicago, squints in the direction of "colonial" design, without being at all a close copy of "colonial" forms. Indeed, above the second story there is nothing "colonial" about it at all; and it is a question whether the combination between plaster story with its overhanging roof and the brick of the first story is very happily made. On the whole, although it bears the appearance of being rather over than under designed, it is an individual and careful piece of work.



PLATE I.—VESTIBULE OF NO. 2 BIS AVE. DES GOBELINS.  
Paris, France.

L. P. Marquet, Architect.

## Modern French Interiors.

A portfolio of plates has come to hand from Paris. The pictures deal with modern interiors in France and Belgium, with at least two plates devoted to the City of Strasburg. The book is published by Charles Schmid, and no author's name, nor the name of any editor appears. This is the more conceivable because there is absolutely no text furnished; and because even the table of contents is a little irregular in the manner of presentation of the separate subjects. The names of the architects and the exact locations of the buildings treated of are given in the table, and that is really all one needs to know, although it would be very well—it would be a great favor to all users of the book—if the materials employed in each separate case were more uniformly and more fully given. The legends or "captions" on the plates themselves are fuller than as given in the table, but even in those legends where the name of the sculptor and the name of the painter may be found, we do not always have any mention of the substance in which the sculpture is carried out. Is it modelled in plaster or carved in white stone? Nothing but the joints of the stone masonry allow us to infer the latter, in Plate I.; nothing but internal probability enables us to fix the location in either picture of the "grès flammés de Bigot." It is not an essay on the artistic merit of the design that is lacking; it is merely a legend twice as long, giving us the knowledge that we really need to possess.

It will not surprise the reader very much if the assertion be made here that these pieces of simple house-decoration are extremely well worthy of study by Americans. The citizens of the United States know, well, the grandiose interior of the millionaire; and they know also the adornment by mantelpieces and similar permanent furniture as well as by decoration of wall and ceiling, of the

moderate house where the fairly successful business man brings up his family. What Americans do not know, from any sight of it in their own towns, is the treatment of such interiors as if they were a part of the house itself, built with the house, to stand and fall with it. It is as yet very uncommon to find decoration of any artistic value, which is other than temporary, movable, a thing which the owner may rip out of the house and carry away with the slightest effort and with but moderate expense. The only apparent exception of this dictum would seem to be the painted ceilings. That is indeed one thing that American decoration has achieved—the use of painted work by artists of real sterling merit; but how far the ceiling panels by Blashfield, Low, Turner, or Mowbray are fixtures; it is impossible to say without taking a most elaborate census. There certainly are rooms in New York where the paintings *ought to remain*; therefore, because we can hardly conceive of the room without them—nothing but the partial destruction of the house would allow of the removal of such wall pictures and ceiling pictures as those which come to mind when we consider the works of our mural painters.

The architect working in Paris, in Brussels, in Strasburg, in Liège, in Vichy, in Vienne (presumably the old city on Rhoneside), is shown by these plates to be more of a practical workman than his American brother—less of a draughtsman—less of an administrator sitting in a distant office and making occasional visits; more—much more—of a workman who sees things put into place and may even be thought to use his own thumbs and fingers in the work. And the copies given here of some few of the plates alluded to above are intended to show the bases for this conclusion. It is not to be denied, of course, that the skilled and practiced workman is much more in evidence in



France than in our American cities; no one who has tried to have decorative work done in Europe, he being on the spot himself to look after it, but will remember his surprise at the facility with which the very first cabinet-maker or stone-cutter that he talks with sees his meaning and is prepared to meet him half way. What does this mean? It means tradition! It means the result on the present generation of the workmanlike habits which existed in many previous generations. Your French carver can do nothing (I have said so myself more times than once in print) can do nothing except in the recognized styles: but he knows those styles in a wonderful way; and when he learns from your remarks or from your preliminary sketches that you mean something in the way of *Louis Treize*, let us say, he is prepared to block out in soft wood friezes and panels quite in harmony with what he takes to be your purpose, and of surprising value to you in your attempts to make up an important piece of decorative joiner work to refresh your sculpture. So in the matter of pure sculpture in material other than wood, it makes little difference to the working sculptor whom you consult whether he is asked to employ one assistant and one set of tools, and with them to work in soft stone of the Paris basin, or whether with other workmen and quite other tools he is to produce something in hard plastering—in stucco or pure gypsum. In either case he will "meet you half way," as has been said before. His readiness and his knowledge are of evident assistance to the designer of the whole work, who is not driven to the wretched habit of drawing everything out to scale and also to full size before he even talks to a workman about the putting of the whole in hand.

I think that some of these truths may be visible even in the half-tones made from these French photogravures. Plate I. is a part of the vestibule of a Paris house, designed by L. P. Marquet; not a costly private hôtel, but a house with apartments for rent. It will be well for us to remember that these handsome

halls, as a New Yorker would call them, lead not from a street door to the staircase and the ground floor rooms, but branch off at right angles from the driveway which forms the chief entrance to the building. The admission of daylight, then, is not from the door alone, but from a window or two opening upon a courtyard, so that the long walls of such a passage, perhaps twenty feet long by less than half that width, may be lighted by windows nearly opposite to it; so avoiding the bewildering shadows of the lighting from one end only. The sculptures are by P. Séguin, (or perhaps Séguin) and close examination of the photogravures, one of which is a large detail, seems to establish the fact of these being in stone, ceiling as well as walls. If this seems to most Americans hard to believe, those doubters may consider the well-known fact that there is done in Paris, and in the other towns which are built up with the soft cream-white material which we call Caen-stone, almost the only modern work in great solid blocks set one upon another in Greek simplicity of process. The Paris workman does use mortar—in that respect he has abandoned his Greek exemplar—but he cuts his blocks straight in four ways and builds piers of them, or he cuts them with two faces, two beds and two vertical joints, and lays each block facing out and in. He is not as afraid of the dampness of out-of-door weather as are his American contemporaries; he is not wild for furring and hollow walls; he seems to find that the stone block weathers on the outside and preserves its interior mass and its inner face very well, without extra precautions. So that although one has little doubt that the uprights, the segmental arches, and the horizontal course above shown in Plate I. are in this case thin interior face-work, he need have no doubt that they are still solid stone. Then the paintings, those of the panels below, with very conventionally arranged flat ivy-pattern, and those with elaborate landscape above, with the hillside and the stream seen through a screen of five-fingered leafage, are all

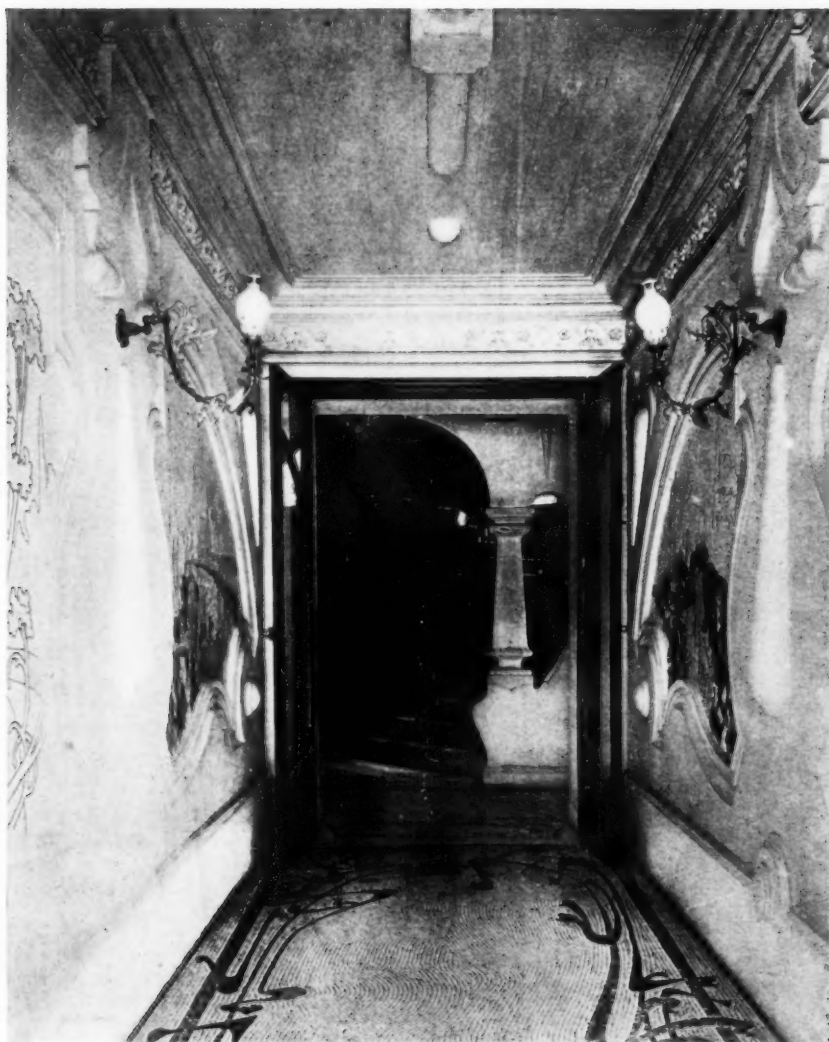


PLATE II—VESTIBULE OF NO. 76 AVE. D'ITALIE.

Sculpture by M. Germain. Mosaics by E. Coignet. G. Just and E. Denis, Architects.

paintings on canvas applied to the wall by the process familiar to us under the French name *marouflage*, and the work of a painter named Rudnicki.

Plate II. shows another vestibule of entrance in a house designed by Messrs. G. Just, and E. Denis; one which unfortunately cannot be made to tell its story well in a photograph, and yet there is so much about it that is impressive, that it seems worth a trial. The sculptures are by M. Germain and they represent the four seasons; and now it will be seen that only the band below the cornice can be expressive of this subject at all. Spring is directly opposite you as you walk toward the staircase; perhaps the flowers and the broad leaves of April can be made out well. Autumn with its fruits is in evidence on your right. Below this autumnal frieze is a large panel in mosaic and its framing is of that curious adaptation of the Louis Quinze which we find mixed up so often with what would otherwise be *art nouveau* pure and simple. On the left hand wall the disposition can be seen more clearly, for there is evident the arrangement in two such panels, each a counterpart of the other so far as its main outline is concerned. These panels are filled by mosaics by Edouard Coignet. The floor of this, as in the vestibule, Plate I., is also in mosaic, but it does not follow that the same artist designed it. Its pattern of reaching out and striving scrolls is not agreeable to contemplate.

Plate III. is the entrance-way of another house in Paris, the work of the architect Gabriel Morice; but in this case it is the driveway itself from which (as other pictures show) the usual cross-passage goes off to the staircase. The subject of our illustration is a corridor walled entirely with stone except that the large panels filled with children carrying great masses of vegetable forms—fruit or flowers or at least branches of trees—are worked in glazed and colored stone-ware by an artist-artisan whose work is frequently cited nowadays, Bigot. The models for these panels of "*grès cérame*" are by A. Cordonnier, and the carving of the stone pilasters

and consols are assigned to F. Kulikowski. There is abundant room to criticise the forms of this composition, and it is one more sad instance of the immense difficulty there is in supplanting the architectural forms of tradition, those which bygone styles have left in our memory, by newer forms of our own devising. That we may admit; and yet the charm of the solid material solidly and well handled, and the use of chromatic sculpture of novel design, is of infinite satisfaction.

Plate IV. is an entrance hall of unusual character, the design of M. L. Gabriel, of T-shape in its plan and the part shown in the half-tone is the wall on the right as you enter—the door on the left opening into the court within, where perhaps the stables are. In this case the walls are of stone and rather massive in appearance, and this solidity is increased by the carving itself, its very elaboration going to produce the effect of rather ponderous dignity. And that is a reasonable effect to seek for in what everyone knows to be the basement story of a six-story building. Here the roof is of our old-fashioned rolled iron beam and glazed brick arch, a form of ceiling which is not in fashion just now, but which had within itself possibilities for admirable decorative effect. Rest each end of your beam on a carved corbel, as is done here, although the corbels here are indeed light and slight, then give to the beam some very small downward projection from the soffit of the arch so that this arch shall seem to spring from a vertical surface, no matter if only a few inches wide, or high, and your room, large or small, may be most effectively closed at top. In the case before us the panels between the corbels and below the arches are filled with "*grès flammés*" (by which we understand colored flashed pottery) by that same Bigot of whom there is mention above. The sculptures in white stone are by P. Seguin.

It is inevitable that in such a collection as this, the designs for halls, vestibules and staircases should be more attractive to one who does not visit and study them

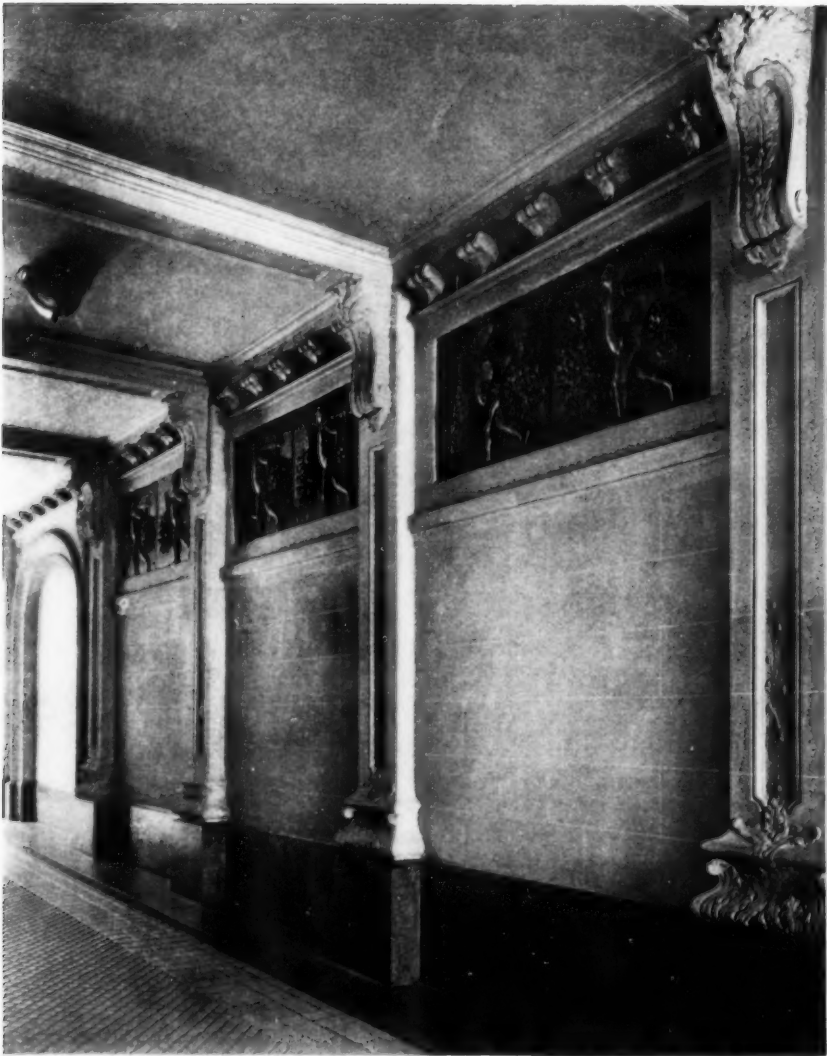


PLATE III.—ENTRANCE DRIVEWAY OF NO. 45 RUE DE POMEREU, PARIS.  
Panels by A. Cordonnier.      Consols by F. Kulikowski.      Gabriel Moriel, Architect.

in detail, but sees their counterfeit presentment in a photograph alone, than the rooms in which people live and those in which they keep their state on great occasions. And this because of the modern tendency to crowd the rooms with gimcracks of every sort, permanent as well as movable, but also movable as well as permanent. The first aspect of a room such as is inhabited by a well-to-do and tasteful family is apt to

staircase or the like, of no better design will be attractive from its very simplicity.

Here, for instance, Plate V., is a chimney-piece in a room at Liège, in Belgium, the design of M. Castermans, architect, and the whole is unquestionably in cut stone; and yet it is evident that if it were in stucco it would be equally worthy, except in that it would not endure. There is a living sculptor

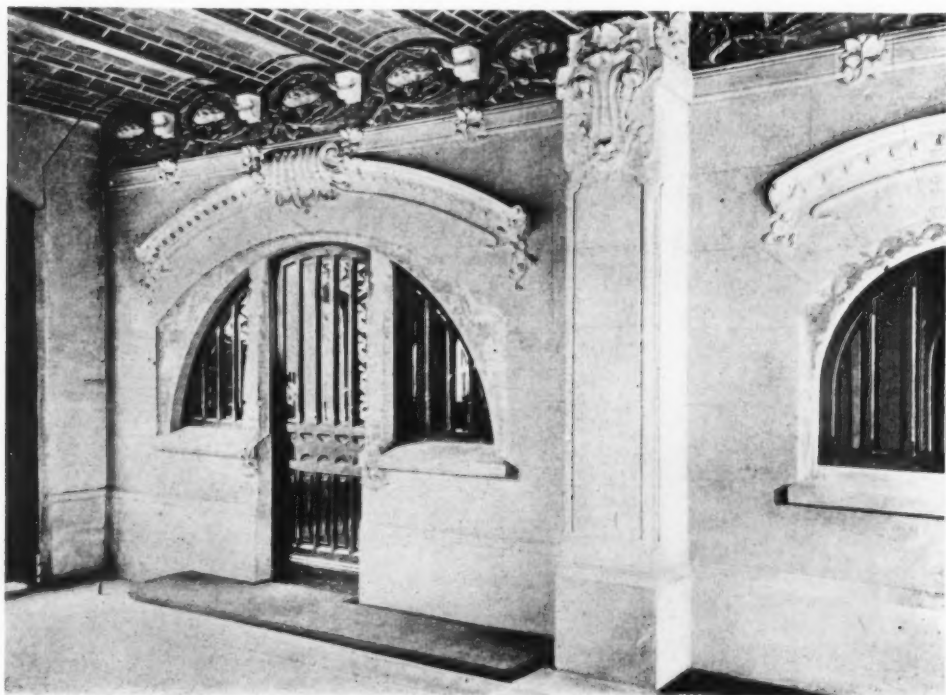


PLATE IV.—ENTRANCE HALL OF NO. 170 RUE DE LA CONVENTION, PARIS.

Sculptures by T. Seguin.

P. Legriel, Architect.

be the insufferable crowd of unrelated parts which challenge one another in demanding your attention. It has been said before in these columns that the only salvation for our living rooms is in their beauty of color! Let the designer be content to get that for he will never get effects of line and mass, form and proportion which will please him in a modern living room. For these reasons the photograph of such a room is apt to be unpleasing, while a corridor, a

whose room is adorned by a frieze of his own make in plaster with delicate little figures set just above the fireplace and occupying the wall of the chimney-breast; there is a hotel in Athens in which the better rooms have carefully-made casts of the exquisite relief sculpture in the Central Museum built into the plastered walls, one such relief above each fireplace. In each case the effect is entirely satisfactory. It is not many years since it was the fashion to pur-



chase casts of no great perfection of make from dealers in our American cities, casts of reliefs of classical or Renaissance work, to paint these in two or three grave colors in harmony with the



PLATE V.—CHIMNEY-PIECE IN A ROOM AT LIEGE, BELGIUM.

Castermans, Architect.

coloring of the room and to lay much stress upon their effect. Now, if in like manner an original sculpture could be used above each mantelpiece, between each pair of windows, above each door-

head, in the middle of each stretch of wall, above each stretch of wall in the form of a frieze, it would need but a slight warning—but a very gently hinted suggestion that there was something worth looking at, to bring all your friends to the awestruck inspection of your adornment. The first glance of a total stranger might be one of mere vague wonder why those queer reliefs were there; but if you had such sculptures as those that have been here suggested, by any of our sculptors who have recently left us, as by Olin Warner, the house would soon be entered in the guide books as one of the sights of the place, if only it might be seen; like those chateaux and "seats" of which it is said—"may be visited when the family is away." That is what I feel in presenting this simple little chimney-piece; although the perspective is such that one cannot judge accurately of the group in relief and though there is sign of some work yet requiring to be done before the piece is finished, it seems well to consider this fireplace, in spite of the warning we receive that it is to be but a gas fireplace after all—see the pipe in the floor below. The dining-room which is to be warmed by that gas-fire may also be disfigured by the usual muddle of unrelated objects, though that is not the custom with French dining rooms, but the chimney will remain as we see it, and it is a proper feeling which has forbid the introduction of a broad shelf to receive movable objects which would compete with the fixed sculpture.

Plate VI. is the corner of a sitting-room, at Brussels, the design of G. Hobé and this is worth study because of the simple effectiveness of the design in that corner where a fireplace set in the angle is placed, flanked on one side by the usual dado crowned with shelving, and on the other side by a window. Whether that window be really an out-of-door light or merely some communication with pantry or service room, for this I find is a dining-room in a southern suburb of Brussels, is not clear, but neither is it important that we



Brussels, Belgium.

PLATE VI.—CORNER OF A DINING-ROOM.

G. Hobe, Architect.

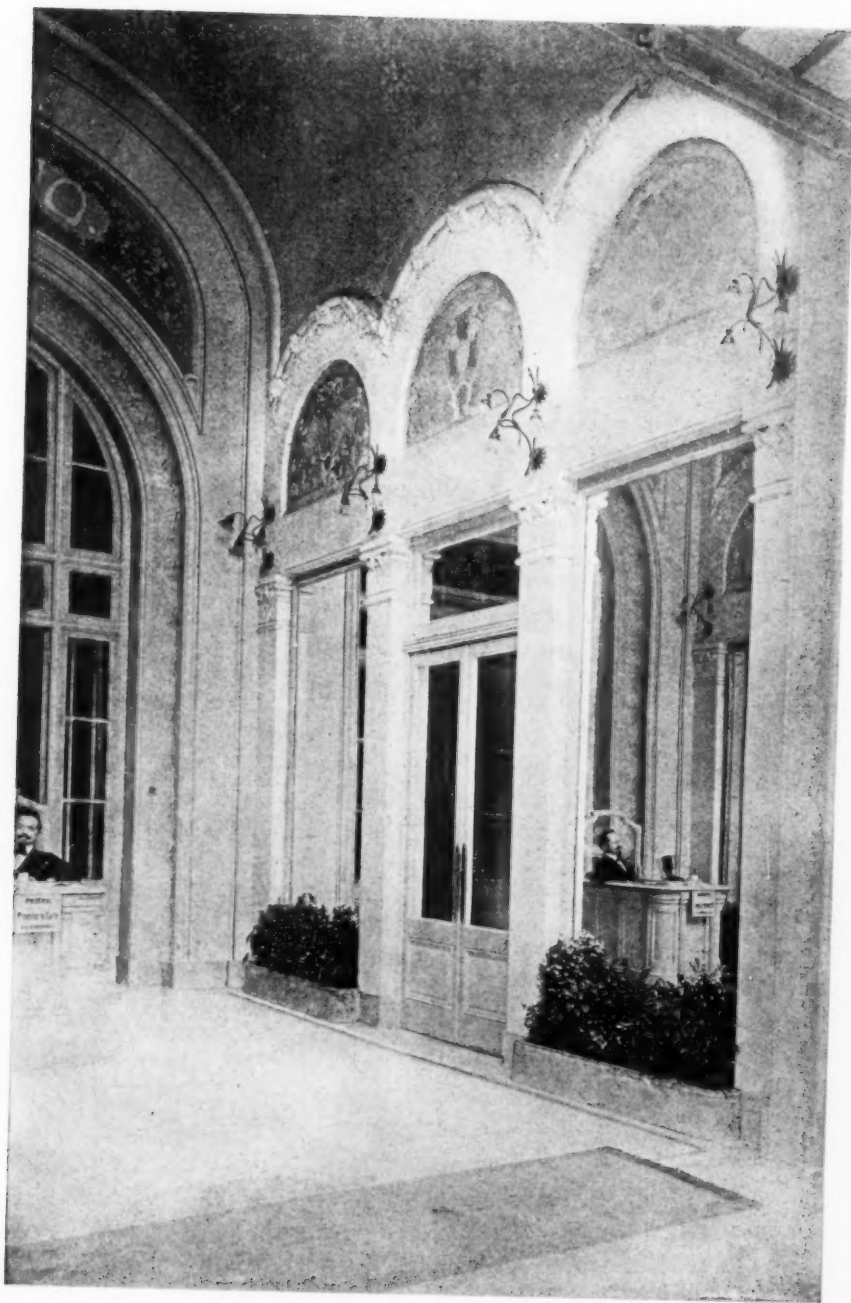


PLATE VII.—THE ENTRANCE OF THE CASINO AT VICHY.  
Allier, France.

Chas. Le Coeur, Architect.

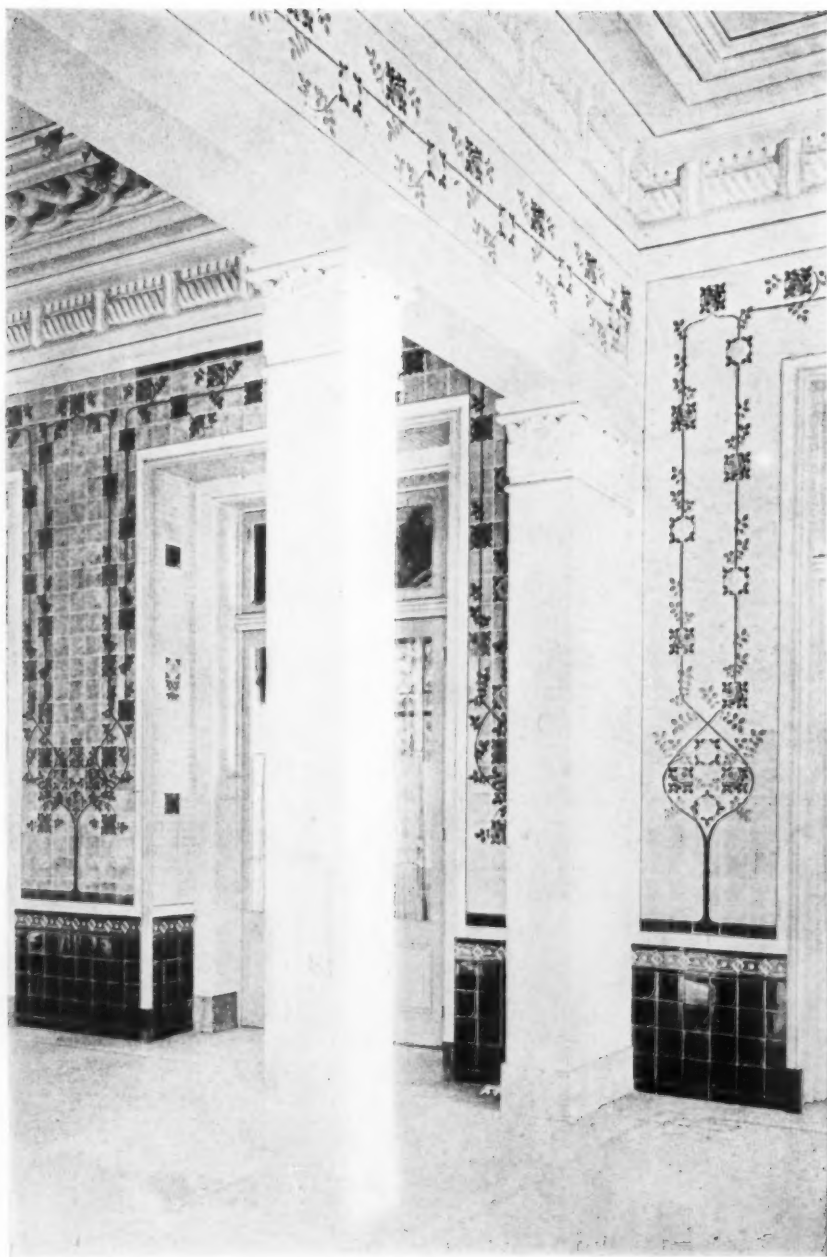


PLATE VIII.—ENTRANCE TO THE RESTAURANT OF THE CASINO AT VICHY,  
Allier, France.

Chas. Le Coeur, Architect.

should know; the lights are filled with rough glass set in lead sash and evidently quite obscured by the very roughness of the material. Then the top shelf crowning the cornice of the whole piece runs continuous, uniting the whole into one composition, and there are several shelves below it. There is room for many more pieces of pottery than are here shown in place, and there is no limit to the magnificence of the pieces you might display in this way, for they are really very safe; it is only she who will come to dust them now and then who will imperil their existence.

With Plate VII. we enter a more stately world, although it is one at which people may sniff if they choose. The Casino at Vichy, the work of M. Charles Le Coeur is certainly a more grave and reputable place of resort than the similar building at Homburg or Wiesbaden, and the building they have there is stately, as is the custom for such buildings to be in France—buildings which represent a half-national enterprise. This illustration is the main entrance shown as it looks to a visitor who has just mounted the steps of the approach and who finds himself face to face with *le contrôle* and with its self-conscious occupant. The rather vigorous architectural treatment of the wall opposite us in the picture is marred indeed by the great panels being filled with mirrors, but if we put that case the other way, and admit that the mirrors must be there or it would not be the entrance to a casino, then perhaps this white stone *pilastrata* may pass as a very good framing for them and for the doors which lead into one of the great saloons. The artist's name is not given in this case, but it is plain that a very careful designer of color-effects has been at work, and a certain very pleasant use of naturalistic plant forms is to be seen on the vaulted ceiling itself, in the great moulding around the doorway, in the

tympanums of the smaller arches and of the large arch: but why does the artist allow himself to play tricks with the letters of our Roman alphabet? The French know so well how to take those Roman letters and treat them simply and give them a certain picturesque grace, that it seems inexcusable to undertake such vagaries as are suggested here.

Plate VIII. is a view in the same large building, and here we are at the entrance of the restaurant, of which the walls in the ante-room and the main hall itself are faced alike with glazed tile, with a good deal of character in its design. Another view, which we cannot find room for, shows the large room of the restaurant with a long array of square-headed doorways like those of which we see two or three in Plate VIII., so that there is nowhere a large surface of wall to treat with tiles. The result of this is seen in the particular design adopted, one which is fitted evidently for the treatment of the somewhat narrow piers alternating with door-pieces. The ceiling need not engage our attention. It has evidently not received much care from its designer, and no one can be expected to like either that of the vestibule on the right, or that of the large hall on the left, with its deeply-cut but most ineffective border. It is the tile-work which is effective here and it is worth anyone's while to study out the system adopted and to see how few separate designs for the painting of the individual tiles have been found necessary. It is probable that there are not more than six different patterns of painted tiles in the whole composition; and it would be worth while to inquire whether the design was made first and the tiles painted afterwards, or whether the ingenious designer had selected his tiles from a larger lot and had found a way to bring them into touch with each other in this quite impeccable fashion.

Russell Sturgis





Terra Cotta Feature for Arch.  
Made by the New Jersey Terra Cotta Co.

## The Use of Terra Cotta in the United States; How It Has Increased.

### No. I.

The several important architectural styles have all been associated with certain characteristic uses of a certain material. In China and Japan economic conditions and technical skill were of a kind that necessitated wooden or clay structures. In the Mesopotamian Valley the Babylonians and Assyrians erected clay palaces and temples. The Egyptians quarried great masses of stone for their places of worship out of the hills which bordered the Nile. Grecian architecture is adapted to the precise and subtle employment of certain kinds of finished stone. Finally the different forms of European domestic architecture all carry with them particular materials—such as wood in the half-timbered house, plaster or stone in the Italian villa, and brick or stone in Jacobean or Georgian dwellings.

The cheapness of timber has in the past constituted wood as the characteristic American building material; but it is obvious that the supremacy of the carpenter is on the wane. The increased price of wood, the smaller cost of certain other materials, and the economic necessity of fireproof and more substantial structures are coöperating to diminish the importance of wood compared to stone and clay or chemical products. Moreover, the varying conditions existing in different parts of the United States, the inexhaustible demand for diverse types and kinds of build-

ings will prevent the indisputable sway of any one material. Just as American architecture has inherited all the European architectural styles from which to select and adapt the forms it needs, so it has inherited all the time-honored building materials. These materials can be developed in accordance with the peculiarly American economic conditions, and technical methods; and the improvement of our architectural design depends quite as much upon the adaptation of the design to the material as it does upon the idiomatic and consistent handling of the architectural forms for their own sake. No one material will dominate American building; but each important material will occupy a place corresponding to the completeness with which it serves our practical needs. Owing to the novelty of some of those needs and conditions, the place of particular materials will be very different from those they have occupied in the building of European and Asiatic countries: and the competition among the various materials is so keen, that each one of them will have to earn its place by the substantial and incontestable nature of the advantages it offers.

It is the object of the series of articles, of which this is the first, to point out some of the advantages of terra cotta as a material, and to outline the place which it is coming to occupy in American arch-

itecture and building. It is perfectly evident that these advantages are so great that its place will be most important; but it is not quite so obvious just what that place will be, or how terra cotta should be used in order properly to fill it. Perhaps the best way to obtain some indication as to the advantages of terra cotta, the effective methods of using it in architectural design, and its proper place in the hierarchy of building materials will be to give a brief account of its origins in this country and of the great growth both in the amount and in the scope of its employment.

Terra cotta is one of the oldest and one of the most generally popular building materials. Primitive races used sun-dried and burnt clay in large quantities and for various purposes. The Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Romans all employed it to a greater or smaller extent in connection with their building. Naturally it was most necessary to these peoples whose structural material was brick rather than stone; but even the great stone builders found various subordinate ways of applying it to their buildings. It was the same during Mediæval and Renaissance times. In the plains of Lombardy particularly, where stone was rare, brick

and terra cotta were the prevailing materials, and while it was less frequently employed on the other side of the Alps, certain parts of Germany, France and England were so situated that many of the buildings were erected



Main Entrance to St. Aloysius' Church, West 132d Street, N. Y.  
W. W. Renwick, Architect.

Terra Cotta made by New York Architectural Terra Cotta Co.

of brick and terra cotta. Brick has been the structural and terra cotta the ornamental material which have throughout the centuries been the great competitors of stone and stone carving.

In the United States the use of brick preceded by a good many years that of

terra cotta. During the early period of American building, wood was about the only material which people could afford to work into ornament; and later when more substantial ornamental forms were required, the stone-cutter naturally pre-

paratively late date. Indeed, its introduction is practically contemporary with the modern movement in American architecture; and the architects chiefly associated with its effective and abundant employment are still living and in

active practice. Attempts had, indeed, been made to manufacture it on a commercial scale at an earlier date. In 1853 Mr. James Renwick, the well-known architect, conceived the idea of substituting terra cotta for the cut stone work, which then prevailed in New York, and he induced a manufacturer of glazed and other earthen sewer pipe to produce it from his designs and under his supervision. He believed that it would prove to be more durable, less expensive, and more ornamental than the free-stone, which was then universally employed in New York. He used it for the belt courses and the cornice of the Tontine building; the ornamental work on the St. Denis Hotel, and on three houses on 9th St., between 5th and 6th Aves. The attempt to introduce the material was, however, for the time being a failure. Stone-cutters and builders violently opposed its use, and very little of it found lodgment in any buildings, except those named above. The



Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, Philadelphia, Pa.

G. W. & W. D. Hewitt, Architects.

Terra Cotta furnished and erected by Atlantic Terra Cotta Co.

ceded the designer and manufacturer of terra cotta. In a country such as the United States, which started with only a meagre technical knowledge and in which economic conditions favored ready-made materials, the use of terra cotta in large quantities came at a com-

court of the old Lafarge Hotel, since destroyed by fire, and the old Trinity Building, also contained some terra cotta; but the cases were very rare. The manufacturer, after losing money on the enterprise, was obliged to abandon the attempt; and for many years nothing

more was heard of terra cotta in New York. Neither was this failure solely the result of interested opposition. The first terra cotta manufactured in this country was not well adapted for use in masses to sustain weights, and it was not designed with sufficient reference to its limitations and qualities as a material. People were so much accustomed to stone that the burnt clay product was generally painted to look as much like stone as possible; and the only good substitute for one kind of stone is another kind. American building was not in 1853 either architecturally or technically prepared for the introduction of terra cotta.

It was not until about twenty-five years later that the attempt to introduce terra cotta was renewed. In the meantime, indeed, a builder in Louisville, Kentucky, had been trying to make a sort of terra cotta, which has been described as "a clay imitation of an iron imitation of stone," and while this undertaking also failed to succeed for many years, it was the parent of one of the best known and most prosperous terra cotta companies doing business in the West.

The period of rapid growth began about 1879, and was coincident with the sudden and enormous extension of American building and architecture, which began about that time. It was the period when the skyscraper, while not actually a fact, was distinctly foreshadowed, when the American millionaire first began to build sumptuous dwellings, and when

American architects were coming to know better and better every year what they wanted to do and how best to do it.

The two architects, or architectural firms, which have had most to do with the introduction of terra cotta into Eastern building were Mr. Geo. B. Post and Messrs. McKim, Mead & White. Richardson preferred the massive stone walls, to which his peculiar tendency in



Keith's New Theatre, Philadelphia, Pa.

Bruce Price, Architect.

Terra Cotta by Conkling-Armstrong Terra Cotta Co.

design was adapted. The late R. M. Hunt employed some terra cotta, of course; but he did very little to popularize the material. Geo. B. Post was the first architect to make terra cotta contribute in an essential manner to the decoration of an important structure. The ornamental members of the building of the Long Island Historical So-

ciety, erected in Brooklyn in 1879, were made of red terra cotta, some of the heads being designed by Olin Warner; and in 1881 his plans for the new Produce Exchange, New York City called for a red brick building, ornamented in terra cotta. It was these two buildings

because terra cotta was employed chiefly on brick buildings, and at that time bricks of varied colors were not commercially manufactured. It should be noted also that it was between 1885 and 1890 that the old brown freestone, so long the dominant material in New

York, was replaced by brick and other stones for ordinary speculative residences and flats, and this substitution very largely increased the ordinary commercial use of terra cotta. During the same years the prominent Western architects were specifying it in their buildings in very much the same way and to very much the same extent. The Romanesque movement in that part of the country consumed large amounts of terra cotta, as well as of stone.

The second period in the American use of terra cotta began about ten years after the beginning of the period; and just as Mr. Geo. B. Post was responsible for the way it was used

which set the ball rolling, and throughout the eighties almost all the terra cotta used was colored in the same warm red, until the word terra cotta became identified with the color almost as much as with the material. Of course, that was

in the first decade, so Messrs. McKim, Mead & White were responsible for the change in its use, which started in about 1889 and 1890. In several important buildings erected in 1890 or the years immediately succeed-



Mantel in Residence of Mrs. G. R. Fell, Philadelphia, Pa.  
Peabody & Stearns, Architects.

Terra Cotta executed by The Standard Terra Cotta Works.



ing they employed a deep yellow or buff terra cotta, which, in the course of time, came largely to supersede the red, which was formerly so popular. Among the New York City buildings in which the newer material was used may be mentioned the Madison Square Garden, the Century Club, the Herald Building, and the Imperial Hotel. The advantage of the yellow and the buff was that it could be used on buildings,

rus L. W. Eidlitz, Carrère & Hastings, D. H. Burnham & Co., and Louis H. Sullivan should be particularly mentioned. The use of the material had, however, by this time reached a stage in which it did not need any patronage. Early in this period terra cotta for exterior use ceased to be looked upon as an experiment by either architects, builders, or manufacturers, the results secured in the buildings and by the



The Fairmont.  
Reid Brothers, Architects.  
Terra Cotta by The Perth Amboy Terra Cotta Co.

the lower stories of which consisted of limestone. It was a much more adaptable color than was the old terra cotta, and proved its availability by almost immediately jumping into general use.

Space does not permit us to follow out in detail the increasing and more varied employment of terra cotta during the past fifteen years. All the important architects specified it on occasions, and many of them very frequently—among whom Mr. F. H. Kimball, Cy-

architects named having won for it a place distinctly its own, and one bound to grow in importance as the popularity of the tall building increased. Economic and technical causes of the utmost importance were constantly both operating in its favor and increasing and diversifying its employment. We shall treat more in detail in the succeeding papers of this series the character of the economic and technical causes mentioned above; but here it



Consol in Terra Cotta for Newcomb Building, New Orleans, La.  
 Audry & Bendernage, Architects.  
 Made by The Northwestern Terra Cotta Co.

may be premised that the tall building of steel frame construction has from the very necessity of the case been a large consumer of terra cotta. Just as enormous quantities of hollow fire-brick have been necessarily employed to cover in the steel frame and for floor construction, the comparative lightness and cheapness as well as the superior fire-resisting qualities of terra cotta have made its use peculiarly desirable in these buildings for ornamental purposes. While it has not by any means been universally applied to skyscrapers, and when employed, it is sometimes erroneously disguised as stone, still its merits for ornamental purposes on steel frame and fireproof buildings are receiving additional recognition in each succeeding year. This is true not of any one section of the country, being very evidently a widespread and popular movement. Large use of terra cotta both glazed and unglazed has been made in tall buildings recently planned and erected in Chicago, St. Louis, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington; and indeed, in the three most important skyscrapers erected in recent years in New York City, viz., the Fuller, the Times and the Wanamaker buildings, terra cotta is profusely and successfully applied.

Terra cotta not only fills its place as a building material most satisfactorily, but it is not expensive. A single piece costs about the same as sandstone or limestone at the prevailing

price for these materials in most localities. When, however, a number of pieces exactly alike are required, they can be produced in terra cotta cheaper than in stone, unless the terra cotta has to be transported at a large cost for freight. The advantage in point of cost in favor of terra cotta is greatly increased if there be a large proportion of molded work, and especially if the

couraged by the constant improvement which is taking place in the process of manufacturing terra cotta. The material is being made in a more durable manner, so that many architects who objected to its use, in the beginning, are now specifying it in increasing quantities. The improved technical processes also enable the manufacturers to meet in a more satisfactory manner a larger



Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

J. G. Hill, Architect.

Terra Cotta by The Excelsior Terra Cotta Co.

moldings are enriched, or if there are a number of ornamental panels, carved capitals, etc. The use of terra cotta for trimmings and especially for heavy cornices in place of stone often reduces the cost of walls and foundations, as the weight of terra cotta will be much less than that of stone, and the walls and foundations may be made lighter in consequence.

Moreover, this increasing use is en-

variety of demands on the part of architects. It is coming to pass that a fastidious designer can procure terra cotta of any practicable color and texture, and at the same time the modeling achieved in shops of the manufacturing companies is improving in flexibility and vigor. The popular buff material has been succeeded by a white glaze; and the white glaze by the use of many different colors. The surface appearance of the



United States Post-Office, Norwich, Conn.

J. Knox Taylor, Architect.

Terra Cotta by The South Amboy Terra Cotta Co.

glazed material is being softened by sand blasting; and it is evident that the use of the material is entering upon a new and still more important phase. We shall not paint our buildings as the Greeks did, but in many cases we shall encase them in colored terra cotta tiles.

This whole matter will be discussed more fully later in this series of papers. In the present connection we merely de-

sire to point out that after years of growth in the use of the material a period of culmination is now being reached. Terra cotta is not only being used more largely, but it is being used better—in a way which brings out the merits and qualities of the material; and in the next paper of this series we shall point out what the peculiar merits and qualities of terra cotta are.

*Herbert Croly.*



Detail in Terra Cotta.